Letitia THE Houblon

School for Wives.

A

COMEDY.

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL

IN

DRURY-LANE.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. BECKET, IN THE STRAND. 1774.

[PRICE ONE SHILLING AND SIX-PENCE.]

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PREFACE.

THE Author of the following performance cannot commit it to the preſs, without acknowledging the deepeſt ſenſe of gratitude, for the uncommon marks of approbation with which he has been honoured by the Public.

Tho' he has choſen a title us'd by MOLIERE, he has neither borrowed a ſingle circumſtance from that great poet, nor to the beſt of his recollection from any other writer.—His chief ſtudy has been to ſteer between the extremes of ſentimental gloom, and the exceſſes of unintereſting levity; he has ſome laugh, yet he hopes he has alſo ſome leſſon; and faſhionable as it has been lately for the wits,

even

even with his friend Mr. Garrick at their head, to ridicule the Comic Muſe, when a little grave, he muſt think that ſhe degenerates into farce, where the grand buſineſs of inſtruction is neglected, and conſider it as a hereſy in criticiſm, to ſay that one of the moſt arduous taſks within the reach of literature, ſhou'd, when executed, be wholly without utility.

The Author having been preſumptuous enough to aſſert, that he has not purloin'd a ſingle ſprig of bays from the brow of any other writer, he may, perhaps, be aſk'd, if there are not ſeveral plays in the Engliſh language, which, before his, produced Generals, Lawyers, Iriſhmen, Duels, Maſquerades, and Miſtakes? He anſwers, yes; and confeſſes moreover, that all the Comedies before his, were compos'd not only of men and women, but that before his, the great buſineſs of comedy conſiſted in making difficulties for the purpoſe of removing them; in diſtreſſing poor young lovers; and in rendering a happy marriage the object of every cataſtrophe.

Yet tho' the Author of the School for Wives, pleads guilty to all theſe charges, ſtill, in extenuation of his offence, he begs leave to obſerve, that having only

only men and women to introduce upon the ſtage, he was oblig'd to compoſe his Dramatis Perſonæ of mere fleſh and blood; if, however, he has thrown this fleſh and this blood, into *new* ſituations; if he has given a *new* fable, and plac'd his characters in a point of light hitherto unexhibited:—he flatters himſelf that he may call his play, a *new* play, and tho' it did not exiſt before the creation of the world, like the famous Welch pedigree, that he may have ſome ſmall pretenſions to originality.

Two things beſides the general moral inculcated thro' his piece, the Author has attempted; the firſt, to reſcue the law, as a profeſſion, from ridicule or obliquy; and the ſecond, to remove the imputation of a barbarous ferocity, which dramatic writers, even meaning to compliment the Iriſh nation, have connected with their Idea of that gallant people:—The law, like every other profeſſion, may have members who occaſionally diſgrace it; but to the glory of the Britiſh name, it is well know that in the worſt of times, it has produced numbers whoſe virtues reflected honour upon human nature; many of the nobleſt privileges the conſtitution has to boaſt of, were derived from the integrity, or the wiſdom of lawyers:

Yet

Yet the ſtage has hitherto caſt an indiſcriminate ſtigma upon the whole body, and laboured to make that profeſſion either odious or contemptible in the theatre, which, if the laws are indeed dear to good Engliſhmen, can never be too much reſpected in this kingdom. There is ſcarcely a play in which a lawyer is introduced, that is not a libel upon the long robe; and ſo ignorant have many dramatic writers been, that they have made no diſtinction whatever, between the characters of the firſt Barriſters in Weſtminſter-Hall, and the meaneſt ſolicitors at the Old Bailey.

With reſpect to the gentlemen of Ireland, where even an abſolue attempt is manifeſted, to place them in a favourable point of view, they are drawn with a brutal promptitude to quarrel, which is a diſgrace to the well known humanity of their country.—The gentlemen of Ireland have doubtleſs a quick ſenſe of honour, and, like the gentlemen of England, as well as like the gentlemen of every other high-ſpirited nation, are perhaps unhappily too ready to draw the ſword, where they conceive themſelves injured—But to make them proud of a barbarous propenſity to Duelling; to make them actually delight in the effuſion of blood, is to faſten a very unjuſt reproach upon their general character, and to ren-

der

der them univerſally obnoxious to ſociety. The author of the School for Wives therefore, has given a different picture of Iriſh manners, though in humble life, and flatters himſelf that thoſe who are really acquainted with the original, will acknowlege it to be at leaſt a tolerable reſemblance.

It would be ungrateful in the higheſt degree to cloſe this preface, without acknowleging the very great obligations which the author has to Mr. Garrick. Every attention, which either as a manager, or as a man, he could give to the intereſt of the following play, he has beſtowed with the moſt generous alacrity; but univerſally admired as he is at preſent, his intrinſic value will not be known, till his loſs is deplored; and the public have great reaſon to wiſh, that this may be a very diſtant event in the annals of the theatre. The Epilogue ſufficiently marks the maſterly hand from which it originated; ſo does the comic commencement of the Prologue, and the elegant writer of the graver part, is a character of diſtinguiſhed eminence in the literary republic.

It has been remarked with great juſtice, that few new pieces were ever better performed than *The School for Wives*. Mr. King, that highly deſerving favorite

favourite of the town, was every thing the author could poſſibly wiſh in General Savage. Mr. Reddiſh acquired a very conſiderable ſhare of merited reputation in Belville. Mr. Moody is unequalled in his Iriſhmen. Mr. Palmer, from his manner of ſupporting Leeſon, was entitled to a much better part: And Mr. Weſton in Torington was admirable. Miſs Younge, in Mrs. Belville, extorted applauſe from the coldeſt auditor. Her tenderneſs—her force—her pathos, were the true effuſions of genius, and proved that ſhe has no ſuperior where the feelings are to be intereſted. With reſpect to Mrs. Abington, enough can never be ſaid. The elegance, the vivacity, the critical nicety with which ſhe went through Miſs Walſingham, is only to be gueſſed at, by thoſe who are familiar with the performance of that exquiſite actreſs. Her Epilogue was delivered with an animation not to be conceived, and manifeſted the ſtrict propriety, with which ſhe is called the firſt prieſteſs of the Comic Muſe in this country.

Jan. 1, 1774. THE

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES,

BEING A COMEDY IN WHICH THE LADIES ARE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED,

IT SHOULD BE ADDRESS'D TO THE FIRST ORNAMENT OF THE SEX;

AND IS THEREFORE INSCRIBED WITH THE HIGHEST ADMIRATION AND THE MOST PROFOUND REVERENCE,

TO HER MAJESTY;

NOT BECAUSE SHE IS THE GREATEST OF QUEENS,

BUT BECAUSE IN THE MILDER, AND MORE ENDEARING RELATIONS OF LIFE,

SHE IS THE BRIGHTEST PATTERN OF ALL THE FEMALE VIRTUES.

January 1, 1774.

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January 1, 1774.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. KING.

NO coward he, who in this critick age,
Dares ſet his foot upon the dang'rous ſtage;
Theſe boards, like Ice, your footing will betray,
Who can tread ſure upon a ſlipp'ry way?
Yet ſome thro' five acts, ſlide with wond'rous ſkill,
Skim ſwift along, turn, ſtop, or wind at will!
Some tumble, and get up; ſome riſe no more;
While cruel criticks watch them on the ſhore,
And at each ſtumble make a helliſh roar!
A wiſe Philoſopher, hath truly noted,
(His name I have forgot, tho' often quoted,)
That fine-ſpun ſpirits from the ſlighteſt cauſe,
Draw to themſelves affliction, or applauſe:
So fares it with our Bard.—Laſt week he meets
Some hawkers, roaring up and down the ſtreets,
Lives, characters, behaviour, parentage,
Of ſome who lately left the mortal *ſtage!*
His ears ſo caught the ſound, and work'd his mind,
He thought his own name floated in the wind;
As thus—"Here is a faithful, true relation,
" Of the birth, parentage, and education,
" Laſt dying ſpeech, confeſſion, character,
" Of the unhappy malefacterer,
" And comick poet, Thomas Addle Brain!
" Who ſuffer'd Monday *laſt at Drury Lane;*
" All for the price of half-penny a piece;"
Still in his ears theſe horrid ſounds encreaſe!
Try'd and condemn'd, half executed too;
There ſtands the culprit; 'till repriev'd by you.

[going.

Enter

PROLOGUE.

Enter Miſs YOUNGE.

Miſs YOUNGE.

Pray give me leave—I've *ſomething now to ſay.*

Mr. KING.

Is't at the School for Wives, *you're taught this way?*
The School for Huſbands *teaches to obey.*

[Exit.

Miſs YOUNGE.

It is a ſhame, good Sirs, that brother King,
To joke and laughter, ſhould turn every thing.
Our frighted poet would have no denial,
But, begs me to ſay ſomething on his trial:
The School for Wives, *as it to us belongs,*
Should for our uſe be guarded with our tongues.
Ladies, prepare, arm well your brows and eyes,
From thoſe your thunder, theſe your light'ning flies.
Should ſtorms be riſing in the Pit---look down,
And ſtill the waves thus, fair ones, with a frown:
Or ſhould the Galleries for war declare;
Look up---your eyes will carry twice as far.

* *Our Bard, to noble triumphs points your way,*
Bids you in moral principles be gay;
Something he'd alter in your education,
Something which hurting you, *would hurt a* nation:
Ingenuous natures wiſh you to reclaim?
By ſmiling virtue you'll inſure your aim:
That *gilds with bliſs the matrimonial hours,*
And blends her laurels with the ſweeteſt flowers.

Ye married fair! deign to attend our ſchool,
And without uſurpation *learn to rule:*
Soon will he ceaſe mean objects to purſue,
In conſcience wretched till he lives to you;
Your charms will reformation's pain beguile,
And vice *receive a ſtab from every* ſmile.

* The concluſion of the Prologue from this line is by another hand.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. ABINGTON.

CAN *it be thought, ye wives! this ſcribbling fool,*
Will draw you here, by calling you to School?
Does not he know, poor ſoul! to be directed,
Is what you hate, and more to be corrected!!
Long have theſe walls to public fame been known,
An ancient College *to inſtruct the town!*
We've Schools *for* Rakes, *for* Fathers, Lovers, Wives,
For naughty girls and boys, to mend their lives:
Where ſome to yawn, ſome round about to look,
Some to be ſeen, few come to mind their book:
Some with high wit and humour hither run,
To ſweat the maſters---and they call it fun.
Some modiſh ſparks, true ſtoicks, and high bred,
Come, but ne'er know what's done, or ſung, or ſaid;
Should the whole herd of criticks round them roar,
And with one voice cry out, encore! encore!
Or louder yet, off, off; no more! no more!
Should Pit, Box, Gall'ry with convulſions ſhake,
Still are they half aſleep, nor t'other half awake:
O, ladies fair! are theſe fit men to wed?
Such huſbands, half, *had better be* quite *dead.*
But, to return,---vain men, throughout the nation,
Boaſt, they alone, have College *education:*
Are not we *qualify'd to take degrees?*
We've caps, *and* gowns, *nay* bands *too, if you pleaſe,*
Cornelly's, *and* Almack's, *our* Univerſities!
Young female ſtudents riſe, if girls of parts,
*From under graduates,---*miſtreſſes of arts!
The baſhful ſpinſters, turn important ſpouſes,
Strive to be maſters, *and the* heads of houſes!
Will any of you here, bleſt with a wife,
Diſpute the fact,---you dare not for your life.

Pray

EPILOGUE.

Pray tell me truly, criticks, and be free,
Do you this night prefer the Wife *to* me?
Shall Mrs. Belville *give the Play a name?*
What are her merits? a cold, ſmiling dame,
While I, a ſalamander, liv'd in flame!
Preſs'd by three *lovers!---'twas indeed provoking!*
Ladies, upon my word, it was no joking.
Can you from mortal woman more require,
Than ſave her fingers, and yet play with fire?
The riſks I run, the partial bard upbraids;
Wives won't be taught,---be it the School for Maids.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

General SAVAGE,	Mr. KING,
BELVILLE,	Mr. REDDISH,
TORRINGTON,	Mr. WESTON,
LEESON,	Mr. PALMER,
Captain SAVAGE,	Mr. BRERETON,
CONNOLLY,	Mr. MOODY,
SPRUCE,	Mr. BADDELEY,
GHASTLY,	Mr. W. PALMER.

WOMEN.

Miſs WALSINGHAM,	Mrs. ABINGTON,
Mrs. BELVILLE,	Miſs YOUNGE,
Lady RACHEL MILDEW,	Mrs. HOPKINS,
Mrs. TEMPEST,	Mrs. GREVILLE,
Miſs LEESON,	Miſs JARRATT,
MAID,	Mrs. MILLIDGE.

THE

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

General Savage,	Mr. King,
Belville,	Mr. Reddish,
Torrington,	Mr. Weston,
Leeson,	Mr. Palmer,
Captain Savage,	Mr. Brereton,
Connolly,	Mr. Moody,
Spruce,	Mr. Baddeley,
Chastly,	Mr. W. Palmer.

W O M E N.

Miss Walsingham,	Mrs. Abington,
Mrs. Belville,	Miss Younge,
Lady Rachel Mildew,	Mrs. Hopkins,
Mrs. Tempest,	Mrs. Greville,
Miss Leeson,	Miss Jarratt,
Maid,	Mrs. Millidge.

THE

THE School for Wives.

ACT I.

SCENE, *an Apartment at* BELVILLE'S.

Enter Captain SAVAGE, *and Miſs* WALSINGHAM.

CAPT. HA! ha! ha! Well, Miſs Walſingham, this fury is going; what a noble peal ſhe has rung in Belville's ears!

Miſs WAL. Did ſhe ſee you, Captain Savage?

CAPT. No, I took care of that; for tho' ſhe is'n't married to my father, ſhe has ten times the influence of a wife, and might injure me not a little with him, if I didn't ſupport her ſide of the queſtion.

Miſs WAL. It was a pleaſant conceit of Mr. Belville, to inſinuate the poor woman was diſordered in her ſenſes!—

CAPT. And did you obſerve how the termagant's violence of temper, ſupported the probability of the charge?

Miſs WAL. Yes, ſhe became almoſt frantic in reality, when ſhe found herſelf treated like a mad-woman.

CAPT. Belville's affected ſurpriſe too, was admirable!

Miſs WAL. Yes, the hypocritical compoſure of his countenance, and his counterfeit pity for the poor woman, were intolerable!

CAPT. While that amiable creature, his wife, implicitly believed every ſyllable he ſaid—

Miſs WAL. And felt nothing but pity for the accuſer, inſtead of paying the leaſt regard to the accuſation. But pray, is it really under a pretence of getting the girl upon the ſtage, that Belville has taken away Mrs. Tempeſt's neice from the people ſhe boarded with?

CAPT. It is: Belville, ever on the look out for freſh objects, met her in thoſe primitive regions of purity, the Green-Boxes; where, diſcovering that ſhe was paſſionately deſirous of becoming an actreſs, he improved his acquaintance with her, in the fictitious character of an Iriſh manager, and ſhe eloped laſt night, to be, as ſhe imagines, the heroine of a Dublin theatre.

Miſs WAL. So, then, as he has kept his real name artfully conceal'd, Mrs. Tempeſt can at moſt but ſuſpect him of Miſs Leeſon's ſeduction.

CAPT. Of no more; and this, only, from the deſcription of the people who ſaw him in company with her at the play; but, I wiſh the affair may not have a ſerious concluſion; for ſhe has a brother, a very ſpirited young fellow, who is a council in the Temple, and who will certainly call Belville to an account, the moment he hears of it.

Miſs WAL. And what will become of the poor creature after he has deſerted her?

CAPT. You know that Belville is generous to profuſion, and has a thouſand good qualities to counterbalance this ſingle fault of gallantry, which contaminates his character.

Miſs

Miſs WAL. You men! you men!—You are ſuch wretches that there's no having a moment's ſatisfaction with you! and what's ſtill more provoking, there's no having a moment's ſatisfaction without you!

CAPT. Nay, don't think us all alike.

Miſs WAL. I'll endeavour to deceive myſelf; for it is but a poor argument of your ſincerity, to be the confidant of another's falſehood.

CAPT. Nay, no more of this, my love; no people live happier than Belville and his wife; nor is there a man in England, notwithſtanding all his levity, who conſiders his wife with a warmer degree of affection: if you have a friendſhip therefore, for her, let her continue in an error, ſo neceſſary to her repoſe, and give no hint, whatever, of his gallantries to any body.

Miſs WAL. If I had no pleaſure in obliging you, I have too much regard for Mrs. Belville, not to follow your advice; but you need not enjoin me ſo ſtrongly on the ſubject, when you know I can keep a ſecret.

CAPT. You are all goodneſs; and the prudence with which you have conceal'd our private engagements, has eternally oblig'd me; had you truſted the ſecret even to Mrs. Belville, it wou'dn't have been ſafe; ſhe wou'd have told her huſband, and he is ſuch a rattleſkul, that, notwithſtanding all his regard for me, he wou'd have mention'd it in ſome moment of levity, and ſent it in a courſe of circulation to my father.

Miſs WAL. The peculiarity of your father's temper, join'd to my want of fortune, made it neceſſary for me to keep our engagements inviolably ſecret; there is no merit, therefore, either in my prudence, or in my labouring aſſiduouſly to cultivate the good opinion of the General; ſince both were ſo neceſ-

ary to my own happineſs; don't deſpiſe me for this acknowledgement now.

CAPT. Bewitching ſoftneſs!—But your goodneſs, I flatter myſelf, will be ſpeedily rewarded; you are now ſuch a favourite with him, that he is eternally talking of you; and I really fancy he means to propoſe you to me himſelf: for, laſt night, in a few minutes after he had declared you would make the beſt wife in the world, he ſeriouſly aſk'd me if I had any averſion to matrimony?

Miſs WAL. Why, that was a very great conceſſion indeed, as he ſeldom ſtoops to conſult any body's inclinations.

CAPT. So it was, I aſſure you; for, in the army, being uſed to nothing but command and obedience, he removes the diſcipline of the parade into his family, and no more expects his orders ſhou'd be diſputed, in matters of a domeſtic nature, than if they were deliver'd at the head of his regiment.

Miſs WAL. And yet, Mrs. Tempeſt, who you ſay is as much a ſtorm in her nature as her name, is diſputing them eternally.

Enter Mr. and Mrs. BELVILLE.

BEL. Well, Miſs Walſingham, hav'n't we had a pretty morning's viſitor?

Miſs WAL. Really, I think ſo; and I have been aſking Capt. Savage, how long the lady has been diſordered in her ſenſes?

BEL. Why will they let the poor woman abroad, without ſome body to take care of her?

CAPT. O, ſhe has her lucid intervals.

Miſs WAL. I declare I ſhall be as angry with you as I am with Belville. *(aſide to the Captain.)*

Mrs. BEL. You can't think how ſenſibly ſhe ſpoke at firſt.

BEL. I ſhould have had no conception of her madneſs

neſs, if ſhe hadn't brought ſo prepoſterous a charge againſt me.

Enter a Servant.

SER. Lady Rachel Mildew, Madam, ſends her compliments, and if you are not particularly engaged, will do herſelf the pleaſure of waiting upon you.

Mrs. BEL. Our compliments, and we ſhall be glad to ſee her Ladyſhip. [*Ex. Servant.*

BEL. I wonder if Lady Rachel knows that Torrington came to town laſt night from Bath!

Mrs. BEL. I hope he has found benefit by the waters, for he is one of the beſt creatures exiſting; he's a downright parſon Adams, in good nature and ſimplicity.

Miſs WAL. Lady Rachel will be quite happy at his return, and it would be a laughable affair, if a match could be brought about between the old maid and the old bachelor.

CAPT. Mr. Torrington is too much taken up at Weſtminſter-Hall, to think of paying his devoirs to the ladies; and too plain a ſpeaker, I fancy, to be agreeable to Lady Rachel.

BEL. You miſtake the matter widely; ſhe is deeply ſmitten with him; but honeſt Torrington is utterly unconſcious of his conqueſt, and modeſtly thinks that he has not a ſingle attraction for any woman in the univerſe.

Mrs. BEL. Yet my poor aunt ſpeaks ſufficiently plain, in all conſcience, to give him a different opinion of himſelf.

Miſs WAL. Yes, and puts her charms into ſuch repair, whenever ſhe expects to meet him, that her cheeks look for all the world like a raſberry ice upon a ground of cuſtard.

CAPT. I thought *Apollo* was the only god of Lady Rachel's

Rachel's idolatary, and that in her paſſion for poetry ſhe had taken leave of all the leſs elevated affections.

BEL. O, you miſtake again; the poets are eternally in love, and can by no means be calculated to deſcribe the imaginary paſſions, without being very ſuſceptible of the real ones.

Enter Servant.

SER. The man, Madam, from Taviſtock-ſtreet, has brought home the dreſſes for the maſquerade, and deſires to know if there are any commands for him.

Mrs. BEL. O, bid him ſtay till we ſee the dreſſes. [*Ex. Servant.*

Miſs WAL. They are only Dominos.

BEL. I am glad of that; for characters are as difficult to be ſupported at the maſquerade, as they are in real life. The laſt time I was at the Pantheon, a veſtal virgin invited me to ſup with her, and ſwore that her pocket had been pick'd by a Juſtice of peace.

Miſs WAL. Nay, that was not ſo bad, as the Hamlet's Ghoſt that box'd with Henry the Eighth, and afterwards danc'd a hornpipe to the tune of Nancy Dawſon. Ha! ha! ha!—We follow you, Mrs. Belville. [*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to LEESON's *Chambers in the Temple.*

Enter LEESON.

LEES. Where is this clerk of mine? Connolly!

CON. *(behind)* Here, Sir!

LEES. Have you copied the marriage ſettlement, as I corrected it?

CON. *(Enters with piſtols)* Ay, honey, an hour ago.

LEES. What, you have been trying thoſe piſtols?

CON.

CON. By my ſoul, I have been firing them this half hour, without once being able to make them go off.

LEES. They are plaguy dirty.

CON. In troth, ſo they are: I ſtrove to brighten them up a little, but ſome misfortune attends every thing I do, for the more I clane them, the dirtier they are, honey.

LEES. You have had ſome of our uſual daily viſitors for money, I ſuppoſe?

CON. You may ſay that; and three or four of them are now hanging about the door, that I wiſh handſomely hang'd any where elſe, for bodering us.

LEES. No joking, Connolly! my preſent ſituation is a very diſagreeable one.

CON. Faith, and ſo it is; but who makes it diſagreeable? your Aunt Tempeſt would let you have as much money as you pleaſe, but you won't condeſcend to be acquainted with her, though people in this country can be very intimate friends, without ſeeing one anothers faces for ſeven years.

LEES. Do you think me baſe enough to receive a favour from a woman, who has diſgraced her family, and ſtoops to be a kept miſtreſs? you ſee, my ſiſter is already ruin'd by a connection with her.

CON. Ah, Sir, a good guinea isn't the worſe for coming through a bad hand; if it was, what would become of us lawyers? and by my ſoul, many a high head in London would, at this minute, be very low, if they hadn't recieved favours even from much worſe people than kept miſtreſſes.

LEES. Others, Connolly, may proſtitute their honour, as they pleaſe; mine is my chief poſſeſſion, and I muſt take particular care of it.

CON. Honour, to be ſure, is a very fine thing, Sir; but I don't ſee how it is to be taken care of, without a little money; your honour, to my knowledge, has'n't been in your own poſſeſſion theſe two years,

years, and the devil a crum can you honeſtly ſwear by, till you get it out of the hands of your creditors.

Lees. I have given you a licence to talk, Connolly, becauſe I know you faithful; but I hav'n't given you a liberty to ſport with my misfortunes.

Con. You know I'd die to ſerve you, Sir; but of what uſe is your giving me leave to ſpake, if you oblige me to hould my tongue? 'tis out of pure love and affection that I put you in mind of your misfortunes.

Lees. Well, Connolly, a few days will, in all probability, enable me to redeem my honour, and to reward your fidelity; the lovely Emily, you know, has half conſented to embrace the firſt opportunity of flying with me to Scotland, and the paltry trifles I owe, will not be miſs'd in her Fortune.

Con. But, dear Sir, conſider you are going to fight a duel this very evening, and if you ſhou'd be kilt, I fancy you will find it a little difficult, to run away afterwards with the lovely Emily.

Lees. If I fall, there will be an end to my misfortunes.

Con. But ſurely it will not be quite genteel, to go out of the world without paying your debts.

Lees. But how ſhall I ſtay in the world, Connolly, without puniſhing Belville for ruining my ſiſter?

Con. O, the devil fly away with this honour; an ounce of common ſenſe, is worth a whole ſhip load of it, if we muſt prefer a bullet or a halter, to a fine young lady and a great fortune.

Lees. We'll talk no more on the ſubject at preſent: Take this letter to Mr. Belville; deliver it into his own hand, be ſure; and bring me an anſwer: make haſte; for I ſhall not ſtir out till you come back.

Con. By my ſoul, I wiſh you may be able to ſtir out then, honey.—O, but that's true!

Lees. What's the matter?

Con. Why, Sir, the gentleman I laſt liv'd clerk with,

with, died lately and left me a legacy of twenty guineas—

LEES. What! is Mr. Stanley dead?

CON. Faith, his friends have behav'd very unkindly if he is not, for they have buried him theſe ſix weeks.

LEES. And what then?

CON. Why, Sir, I received my little legacy this morning, and if you'd be ſo good as to keep it for me, I'd be much oblig'd to you.

LEES. Connolly, I underſtand you, but I am already ſhamefully in your debt; you've had no money from me this age.—

CON. O Sir, that does not ſignify; if you are not kilt in this damn'd duel, you'll be able enough to pay me; if you are, I ſhan't want it.

LEES. Why ſo, my poor fellow?

CON. Becauſe, tho' I am but your clerk, and tho' I think fighting the moſt fooliſh thing upon earth, I'm as much a gintleman as yourſelf, and have as much right to commit a murder in the way of duelling.

LEES. And what then? You have no quarrel with Mr. Belville?

CON. I ſhall have a damn'd quarrel with him tho' if you are kilt: your death ſhall be reveng'd, depend upon it, ſo let that content you.

LEES. My dear Connolly, I hope I ſhan't want ſuch a proof of your affection.—How he diſtreſſes me!

CON. You will want a ſecond, I ſuppoſe, in this affair: I ſtood ſecond to my own brother, in the Fifteen Acres, and tho' that has made me deteſt the very thought of duelling ever ſince; yet if you want a friend, I'll attend you to the field of death with a great deal of ſatisfaction.

LEES. I thank you, Connolly, but I think it extremely wrong in any man who has a quarrel, to ex-

poſe his friend to difficulties; we ſhou'dn't ſeek for redreſs, if we are not equal to the taſk of fighting our own battles; and I chooſe you particularly, to carry my letter becauſe, you may be ſuppoſed ignorant of the contents, and thought to be acting only in the ordinary courſe of your buſineſs.

Con. Say no more about it, honey; I will be back with you preſently. *(going, returns.)* I put the twenty guineas in your pocket, before you were up, Sir; and I don't believe you'd look for ſuch a thing there, if I wasn't to tell you of it. [*Exit.*

Lees. This faithful, noble-hearted creature!—but let me fly from thought; the buſineſs I have to execute, will not bear the teſt of reflection. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Connolly.

Con. As this is a challenge, I ſhou'dn't go without a ſword; come down, little tickle-pitcher. *(Takes a ſword.)* Some people may think me very conceited now; but as the dirtieſt black legs in town can wear one without being ſtared at, I don't think it can ſuffer any diſgrace by the ſide of an honeſt man. [*Exit.*

SCENE *changes to an Apartment at* Belville's.

Enter Mrs. Belville.

Mrs. Bel. How ſtrangely this affair of Mrs. Tempeſt hangs upon my ſpirits, tho' I have every reaſon, from the tenderneſs, the politeneſs, and the generoſity of Mr. Belville, as well as from the woman's behaviour, to believe the whole charge the reſult of a diſturb'd imagination.—Yet ſuppoſe it ſhould be actually true;—heigho!—well, ſuppoſe it ſhou'd;—I wou'd endeavour—I think I wou'd endeavour to keep my temper:—a frowning face never recovered a heart that was not to be fix'd with a ſmiling one;—but women, in general, forget this grand article of the matrimonial

trimonial creed entirely; the dignity of inſulted virtue obliges them to play the fool, whenever their Corydons play the libertine;—and poh! they muſt pull down the houſe about the traitor's ears, tho' they are themſelves to be cruſh'd in pieces by the ruins.

Enter a Servant.

SER. Lady Rachel Mildew, madam. [*Exit Ser.*

Enter Lady RACHEL MILDEW.

Lady RACH. My dear, how have you done ſince the little eternity of my laſt ſeeing you. Mr. Torrington is come to town, I hear.

Mrs. BEL. He is, and muſt be greatly flattered to find that your Ladyſhip has made him the hero of your new comedy.

Lady RACH. Yes, I have drawn him as he is, an honeſt practitioner of the law; which is I fancy no very common character---

Mrs. BEL. And it muſt be a vaſt acquiſition to the Theatre.

Lady RACH. Yet the managers of both houſes have refuſed my play; have refuſed it peremptorily! tho' I offer'd to make them a preſent of it.

Mrs. BEL. That's very ſurprizing, when you offer'd to make them a preſent of it.

Lady RACH. They alledge that the audiences are tired of crying at comedies; and inſiſt that my Deſpairing Shepherdeſs is abſolutely too diſmal for repreſentation.

Mrs. BEL. What, tho' you have introduced a lawyer in a new light?

Lady RACH. Yes, and have a boarding-ſchool romp, that ſlaps her mother's face, and throws a baſon of ſcalding water at her governeſs.

Mrs. BEL. Why, ſurely, theſe are capital jokes!

Lady RACH. But the managers can't find them out.—However, I am determined to bring it out ſomewhere; and I have diſcover'd ſuch a treaſure for my boarding-ſchool romp, as exceeds the moſt ſanguine expectation of criticiſm.

Mrs. BEL. How fortunate!

Lady RACH. Going to Mrs. Le Blond, my milliner's, this morning, to ſee ſome contraband ſilks, (for you know there's a foreign miniſter juſt arriv'd) I heard a loud voice rehearſing Juliet, from the dining-room; and upon enquiry found that it was a country girl, juſt elop'd from her friends in town, to go upon the ſtage with an Iriſh manager.

Mrs. BEL. Ten to one, the ſtrange woman's neice, who has been here this morning. (*aſide.*

Lady RACH. Mrs. Le Blond has ſome doubts about the manager it ſeems, though ſhe hasn't ſeen him yet, becauſe the apartments are very expenſive, and were taken by a fine gentleman out of livery.

Mrs. BEL. What am I to think of this?—Pray, Lady Rachel, as you have convers'd with this young actreſs, I ſuppoſe you could procure me a ſight of her.

Lady RACH. This moment if you will, I am very intimate with her already; but pray keep the matter a ſecret from your huſband, for he is ſo witty, you know, upon my paſſion for the drama, that I ſhall be teized to death by him.

Mrs. BEL. O, you may be very ſure that your ſecret is ſafe, for I have a moſt particular reaſon to keep it from Mr. Belville; but he is coming this way with Captain Savage, let us at preſent avoid him. [*Exeunt.*

Enter BELVILLE, *and Captain* SAVAGE.

CAPT. You are a very ſtrange man, Belville; you are for ever tremblingly ſolicitous about the happineſs

pineſs of your wife, yet for ever endangering it by your paſſion for variety.

Bel. Why, there is certainly a contradiction between my principles and my practice; but, if ever you marry, you'll be able to reconcile it perfectly. Poſſeſſion, Savage! O, poſſeſſion, is a miſerable whetter of the appetite in love! and I own myſelf ſo ſad a fellow, that though I wou'dn't exchange Mrs. Belville's mind for any woman's upon earth, there is ſcarcely a woman's perſon upon earth, which is not to me a ſtronger object of attraction.

Capt. Then perhaps in a little time you'll be weary of Miſs Leeſon?

Bel. To be ſure I ſhall; though to own the truth, I have not yet carried my point concluſively with the little monkey.

Capt. Why how the plague has ſhe eſcap'd a moment in your hands?

Bel. By a mere accident.—She came to the lodgings, which my man Spruce prepar'd for her, rather unexpectedly laſt night, ſo that I happened to be engaged particularly in another quarter—you underſtand me—and the damn'd aunt found me ſo much employment all the morning, that I could only ſend a meſſage by Spruce, promiſing to call upon her the firſt moment I had to ſpare in the courſe of the day.

Capt. And ſo your are previouſly ſatisfied that you ſhall be tired of her.

Bel. Tir'd of her?—Why I am at this moment in purſuit of freſh game, againſt the hour of ſatiety:—Game that you know to be exquiſite! and I fancy I ſhall bring it down, though it is cloſely guarded by a deal of that pride, which paſſes for virtue with the generallity of your mighty good people.

Capt. Indeed! and may a body know this wonder?

Bel.

BEL. You are to be truſted with any thing, for you are the cloſeſt fellow I ever knew, and the rack itſelf would hardly make you diſcover one of your own ſecrets to any body—what do you think of Miſs Walſingham?

CAPT. Miſs Walſingham?—Death and the devil! (*aſide.*

BEL. Miſs Walſingham.

CAPT. Why ſurely ſhe has not received your addreſſes with any degree of approbation?

BEL. With every degree of approbation I cou'd expect.

CAPT. She has?

BEL. Ay: Why this news ſurpriſes you?

CAPT. It does indeed!

BEL. Ha, ha, ha! I can't help laughing to think what a happy dog Miſs Walſingham's huſband is likely to be!

CAPT. A very happy dog, truly!

BEL. She's a delicious girl, is'n't ſhe, Savage?—but ſhe'll require a little more trouble;—for a fine woman, like a fortified town, to ſpeak in your father's language, demands a regular ſiege; and we muſt even allow her the honours of war, to magnify the greatneſs of our own victory.

CAPT. Well, it amazes me how you gay fellows ever have the preſumption to attack a woman of principle; Miſs Walſingham has no apparent levity of any kind about her.

BEL. No; but ſhe continued in my houſe, after I had whiſpered my paſſion in her ear, and gave me a ſecond opportunity of addreſſing her improperly; what greater encouragement cou'd I deſire?

Enter SPRUCE.

Well, Spruce, what are your commands?

SPRUCE. My Lady is juſt gone out with Lady Rachel, Sir.

BEL.

BEL. I underſtand you.

SPRUCE. I believe you do. (*Aſide.*) [*Exit.*

CAPT. What is the Engliſh of theſe ſignificant looks between Spruce and you?

BEL. Only that Miſs Walſingham is left alone, and that I have now an opportunity of entertaining her; you muſt excuſe me, Savage; you muſt upon my ſoul; but not a word of this affair to any body; becauſe when I ſhake her off my hands, there may be fools enough to think of her, upon terms of honourable matrimony. [*Exit*

CAPT. So, here's a diſcovery! a precious diſcovery! and while I have been racking my imagination, and ſacrificing my intereſt, to promote the happineſs of this woman, ſhe has been liſtening to the addreſſes of another; to the addreſſes of a married man! the huſband of her friend, and the immediate friend of her intended huſband!—By Belville's own account, however, ſhe has not yet proceeded to any criminal lengths---But why did ſhe keep the affair a ſecret from me? or why did ſhe continue in his houſe after a repeated declaration of his unwarrantable attachment?---What's to be done?---If I open my engagement with her to Belville, I am ſure he will inſtantly deſiſt;—but then her honour is left in a ſtate extremely queſtionable—It ſhall be ſtill concealed—While it remains unknown, Belville will himſelf tell me every thing;—and doubt, upon an occaſion of this nature, is infinitely more inſupportable than the downright falſehood of the woman whom we love. [*Exit.*

The END *of the* FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE, *an Apartment in General* SAVAGE'S *Houſe.*

Enter General SAVAGE, *and* TORRINGTON.

GEN. ZOUNDS! Torrington, give me quarter, when I ſurrender up my ſword: I own that for theſe twenty years, I have been ſuffering all the inconveniences of marriage, without taſting any one of its comforts, and rejoicing in an imaginary freedom, while I was really grovelling in chains.

TOR. In the dirtieſt chains upon earth;—yet you wou'dn't be convinc'd, but laugh'd at all your married acquaintance as ſlaves, when not one of them put up with half ſo much from the worſt wife, as you were oblig'd to crouch under, from a kept miſtreſs.

GEN. 'Tis too true. But, you know, ſhe ſacrificed much for me;—you know that ſhe was the widow of a colonel, and refus'd two very advantageous matches on my account.—

TOR. If ſhe was the widow of a judge, and had refuſed a high chancellor, ſhe was ſtill a devil incarnate, and you were of courſe a madman to live with her.

GEN. You don't remember her care of me when I have been ſick.—

TOR. I recollect, however, her uſage of you in health, and you may eaſily find a tenderer nurſe, when you are bound over by the gout or the rheumatiſm.

GEN. Well, well, I agree with you that she is a devil incarnate; but I am this day determin'd to part with her for ever.

TOR. Not you indeed.

GEN. What, don't I know my own mind?

TOR. Not you indeed, when she is in the question; with every body else, your resolution is as unalterable as a determination in the house of peers; but Mrs. Tempest is your fate, and she reverses your decrees with as little difficulty as a fraudulent debtor now-a-days procures his certificate under a commission of bankruptcy.

GEN. Well if, like the Roman Fabius, I conquer by delay, in the end, there will be no great reason to find fault with my generalship. The proposal of parting now comes from herself.

TOR. O, you darn't make it for the life of you.

GEN. You must know that this morning we had a smart cannonnading on Belville's account, and she threatens, as I told you before, to quit my house if I don't challenge him for taking away her neice.

TOR. That fellow is the very devil among the women, and yet there isn't a man in England fonder of his wife.

GEN. Poh, if the young minx hadn't surrender'd to him, she would have capitulated to somebody else, and I shall at this time be doubly obliged to him, if he is any ways instrumental in getting the aunt off my hands.

TOR. Why at this time?

GEN. Because to shew you how firm my resolution is to be a keeper no longer, I mean to marry immediately.

TOR. And can't you avoid being prest to death, like a felon who refuses to plead, without incurring a sentence of perpetual imprisonment?

GEN. I fancy you would yourself have no objection

jection to a perpetual impriſonment in the arms of Miſs Walſingham.

Tor. But have you any reaſon to think that upon examination in a caſe of love, ſhe would give a favourable reply to your interrogatories?

Gen. The greateſt—do you think I'd hazard ſuch an engagement without being perfectly ſure of my ground? Notwithſtanding my preſent connection won't ſuffer me to ſee a modeſt woman at my own houſe—She always treats me with particular attention whenever I viſit at Belville's, or meet her any where elſe—If fifty young fellows are preſent, ſhe directs all her aſſiduities to the old ſoldier, and my ſon has a thouſand times told me that ſhe profeſſes the higheſt opinion of my underſtanding.

Tor. And truly you give a notable proof of your underſtanding, in thinking of a woman almoſt young enough to be your grand-daughter.

Gen. Nothing like an experienc'd chief to command in any garriſon.

Tor. Recollect the ſtate of your preſent citadel.

Gen. Well, if I am blown up by my own mine, I ſhall be the only ſufferer—There's another thing I want to talk of, I am going to marry my ſon to Miſs Moreland.

Tor. Miſs Moreland!—

Gen. Belville's ſiſter.

Tor. O, ay, I remember that Moreland had got a good eſtate to aſſume the name of Belville.

Gen. I have'nt yet mention'd the matter to my ſon, but I ſettled the affair with the girl's mother yeſterday, and ſhe only waits to communicate it to Belville, who is her oracle, you know.

Tor. And are you ſure the captain will like her?

Gen. I am not ſo unreaſonable as to inſiſt upon his liking her, I ſhall only inſiſt upon his marrying her.

Tor. What, whether he likes her or not?

Gen.

GEN. When I iſſue my orders, I expect them to be obey'd; and don't look for an examination into their propriety.

TOR. What a delightful thing it muſt be to live under a military government, where a man is not to be troubled with the exerciſe of his underſtanding.

GEN. Miſs Moreland has thirty thouſand pounds—That's a large ſum of ammunition money.

TOR. Ay, but a marriage merely on the ſcore of fortune, is only gilding the death-warrant ſent down for the execution of a priſoner. However as I know your obſtinate attachment to what you once reſolve, I ſhan't pretend to argue with you; where are the papers which you want me to conſider?

GEN. They are in my library—File off with me to the next room and they ſhall be laid before you—But firſt I'll order the chariot, for the moment I have your opinion, I purpoſe to ſit down regularly before Miſs Walſingham—who waits there?

Enter a ſervant.

GEN. Is Mrs. Tempeſt at home?

SERV. Yes, Sir, juſt come in, and juſt going out again.

GEN. Very well; order the chariot to be got ready.

SERV. Sir, one of the pannels was broke laſt night at the Opera-houſe.

GEN. Sir, I didn't call to have the pleaſure of your converſation, but to have obedience paid to my orders.

TOR. Go order the chariot, you blockhead.

SERV. With the broken pannel, Sir.

GEN. Yes, you raſcal, if both pannels were broke, and the back ſhattered to pieces.

SERV. The coachman thinks that one of the wheels is damag'd, Sir.

GEN. Don't attempt to reaſon, you dog, but exe-

cute your orders.——Bring the chariot without the wheels—if you can't bring it with them.

TOR. Ay bring it, if you reduce it to a ſledge, and let your maſter look like a malefactor for high treaſon, on his journey to Tyburn.

Enter Mrs. TEMPEST.

Mrs. TEMP. General Savage, is the houſe to be for ever a ſcene of noiſe with your domineering?—The chariot ſhan't be brought—it won't be fit for uſe 'till it is repaired—and John, ſhall drive it this very minute to the coach-makers.

GEN. Nay, my dear, if it isn't fit for uſe that's another thing.

TOR. Here's the experienced chief that's fit to command in any garriſon. *(aſide.)*

GEN. Go order me the coach then. *(to the Ser.*

Mrs. TEMP. You can't have the coach.

GEN. And why ſo, my love.

Mrs. TEMP. Becauſe I want it for myſelf.—Robert, get a hack for your maſter—tho' indeed I don't ſee what buſineſs he has out of the houſe.

[Exeunt Mrs. Tempeſt and Robert.

TOR. When you iſſue your orders, you expect them to be obey'd, and don't look for an examination into their propriety.

GEN. The fury!—this has ſteel'd me againſt her for ever, and nothing on earth can now prevent me from drumming her out immediately.

Mrs. TEMP. *(behind)* An unreaſonable old fool—But I'll make him know who governs this houſe!

GEN. Zounds! here ſhe comes again; ſhe has been lying in ambuſcade, I ſuppoſe, and has over heard us.

TOR. What if ſhe has? you are ſteel'd againſt her for ever.

GEN. No, ſhe's not coming—ſhe's going down ſtairs;

ſtairs;—and now, dear Torrington, you muſt be as ſilent as a ſentinel on an out-poſt about this affair. If that virago was to hear a ſyllable of it, ſhe might perhaps attack Miſs Walſingham in her very camp, and defeat my whole plan of operations.

TOR. I thought you were determin'd to drum her out immediately. [*Exeunt.*

The SCENE *changes to* BELVILLE'S.

Enter Miſs WALSINGHAM, *followed by* BELVILLE.

Miſs WAL. I beg, Sir, that you will inſult me no longer with ſolicitations of this nature—Give me proofs of your ſincerity indeed! What proofs of ſincerity can your ſituation admit of, if I could be even weak enough to think of you with partiality at all?

BEL. If our affections, Madam, were under the government of our reaſon, circumſtanced as I am, this unhappy boſom wouldn't be torn by paſſion for Miſs Walſingham.—Had I been bleſs'd with your acquaintance, before I ſaw Mrs. Belville, my hand as well as my heart, wou'd have been humbly offer'd to your acceptance—fate, however, has ordered it otherwiſe, and it is cruel to reproach me with that ſituation as a crime, which ought to be pitied as my greateſt misfortune.

Miſs WAL. He's actually forcing tears into his eyes.—However, I'll mortify him ſeverely. (*aſide.*)

BEL. But ſuch proofs of ſincerity as my ſituation can admit of, you ſhall yourſelf command, as my only buſineſs in exiſtence is to adore you.

Miſs WAL. His only buſineſs in exiſtence to adore me. (*aſide.*)

BEL. Proſtrate at your feet, my deareſt Miſs Walſingham (*kneeling*) behold a heart eternally devoted to your ſervice.—You have too much good ſenſe, Madam, to be the ſlave of cuſtom, and too much humanity not to pity the wretchedneſs you have

cauſed,

caused.—Only, therefore, say that you commiserate my sufferings—I'll ask no more—and surely that may be said, without any injury to your purity, to snatch even an enemy from distraction—where's my handkerchief? (*aside.*

Miss WAL. Now to answer in his own way, and to make him ridiculous to himself—(*aside.*) If I thought, if I could think (*affecting to weep*) that these protestations were real.

BEL. How can you, Madam, be so unjust to your own merit? how can you be so cruelly doubtful of my solemn asseverations?—Here I again kneel, and swear eternal love!

Miss WAL. I don't know what to say—but there is one proof—(*affecting to weep.*)

BEL. Name it, my angel, this moment, and make me the happiest of mankind!

Miss WAL. Swear to be mine for ever.

BEL. I have sworn it a thousand times, my charmer; and I will swear it to the last moment of my life.

Miss WAL. Why then—but don't look at me I beseech you—I don't know how to speak it—

BEL. The delicious emotion—do not check the generous tide of tenderness that fills me with such extasy.

Miss WAL. You'll despise me for this weakness.

BEL. This weakness—this generosity which will demand my everlasting gratitude.

Miss WAL. I am a fool—but there is a kind of fatality in this affair—and I do consent to go off with you.

BEL. Eternal blessings on your condescension.

Miss WAL. You are irresistible, and I am ready to fly with you to any part of the world.

BEL. Fly to any part of the world indeed—you shall fly by yourself then; (*aside.*) You are the most

moſt lovely, the moſt tender creature in the world, and thus again let me thank you: O, Miſs Walſingham, I cannot expreſs how happy you've made me!—But where's the neceſſity of our leaving England?——

Miſs WAL. I thought he wouldn't like to go abroad—(*aſide.*) That I may poſſeſs the pleaſure of your company unrival'd.

BEL. I muſt cure her of this taſte for travelling—— (*aſide.*)

Miſs WAL. You don't anſwer, Mr. Belville?

BEL. Why I was turning the conſequence of your propoſal in my thoughts, as going off—going off—you know.——

Miſs WAL. Why going off, you know, is going off—And what objections can you have to going off?

BEL. Why going off, will ſubject you at a certainty, to the ſlander of the world; whereas by ſtaying at home, we may not only have numberleſs opportunities of meeting, but at the ſame time prevent ſuſpicion it ſelf, from ever breathing on your reputation.

Miſs WAL. I didn't dream of your ſtarting any difficulties, Sir.—Juſt now I was dearer to you than all the world.

BEL. And ſo you are, by heav'n!

Miſs WAL. Why won't you ſacrifice the world then at once to obtain me?

BEL. Surely, my deareſt life, you muſt know the neceſſity, which every man of honour is under of keeping up his character?

Miſs WAL. So, here's this fellow ſwearing to ten thouſand lies, and yet talking very gravely about his honour and his character. (*aſide.*) Why, to be ſure in theſe days, Mr. Belville, the inſtances of conjugal infidelity are ſo very ſcarce, and men of faſhion are ſo remarkable for a tender attachment to their wives, that I don't wonder at your circumſpection.—But do

you

you think I can ſtoop to accept you by halves, or admit of any partnerſhip in your heart?

BEL. O you muſt do more than that, if you have any thing to ſay to me. *(aſide.)* Surely, Madam, when you know my whole ſoul unalterably your own, you will permit me to preſerve thoſe appearances with the world, which are indiſpenſibly requiſite—Mrs. Belville is a moſt excellent woman, however it may be my fortune to be devoted to another—Her happineſs, beſides, conſtitutes a principal part of my felicity, and if I was publicly to forſake her, I ſhould be hunted as a monſter from ſociety.

Miſs WAL. Then, I ſuppoſe, it is by way of promoting Mrs. Belville's repoſe, Sir, that you make love to other women; and by way of ſhewing the nicety of your honour, that you attempt the purity of ſuch as your own roof, peculiarly, intitles to protection. For the honour intended to me—thus low to the ground, I thank you, Mr. Belville.

BEL. Laugh'd at, by all the ſtings of mortification!

Miſs WAL. Good bye.—Don't let this accident mortify your vanity too much;—but take care, the next time you vow everlaſting love, that the object is neither tender enough to ſob—ſob—at your diſtreſs; nor provoking enough to make a propoſal of leaving England.—How greatly a little common ſenſe can lower theſe fellows of extraordinary impudence?

[*Exit.*

BEL. *(alone.)* So then, I am fairly taken in, and ſhe has been only diverting herſelf with me all this time:—however, lady fair, I may chance to have the laugh in a little time on my ſide; for if you can ſport in this manner about the flame, I think it muſt in the run lay hold of your wings:—what ſhall I do in this affair?—ſhe ſees the matter in its true light, and there's no good to be expected from thumping of boſoms, or ſqueezing white handkerchiefs;—no theſe

won't

won't do with women of ſenſe, and in a ſhort time, they'll be ridiculous to the very babies of a boarding-ſchool.

Enter Captain SAVAGE.

CAPT. Well, Belville, what news? You have had a freſh opportunity with Miſs Walſingham.

BEL. Why, faith, Savage, I've had a moſt extraordinary ſcene with her, and yet have but little reaſon to brag of my good fortune, tho' ſhe offer'd in expreſs terms to run away with me.

CAPT. Prith'ee explain yourſelf, man; ſhe cou'dn't ſurely be ſo ſhameleſs!

BEL. O, her offering to run away with me, was by no means the worſt part of the affair.

CAPT. No, then it muſt be damn'd bad indeed! but prith'ee, hurry to an explanation.

BEL. Why then, the worſt part of the affair is, that ſhe was laughing at me the whole time, and made this propoſal of an elopement, with no other view, than to ſhew me in ſtrong colours to myſelf, as a very dirty fellow to the beſt wife in England.

CAPT. I am eaſy. (*aſide.*

Enter SPRUCE.

SPRUCE. Sir, there is an Iriſh gentleman below with a letter for you, who will deliver it to nobody but yourſelf.

BEL. Shew him up then.

SPRUCE. Yes, Sir. [*Exit.*

CAPT. It may be on buſineſs Belville, I'll take my leave of you.

BEL. O, by no means; I can have no buſineſs which I deſire to keep from you, tho' you are the arrant'ſt miſer of your confidence upon earth, and wou'd rather truſt your life in any body's hands, than even a paltry amour with the apprentice of a millener.

Enter CONNOLLY.

CON. Gintlemin, your moſt obedient; pray which of you is Mr. Belville?

BEL. My name is Belville, at your ſervice, Sir.

CON. I have a little bit of a letter for you, Sir.

BEL. (*Reads.*)

SIR,

The people where Miſs Leeſon lately lodg'd, aſſerting poſitively that you have taken her away in a fictitious character, the brother of that unhappy girl, thinks himſelf oblig'd to demand ſatisfaction, for the injury which you have done his family; tho' a ſtranger to your perſon, he is ſufficiently acquainted with your reputation for ſpirit, and ſhall, therefore, make no doubt of ſeeing you with a caſe of piſtols, near the Ring in Hyde Park, at eight o'clock this evening, to anſwer the claims of

To Craggs Belville, Eſq. George Leeſon.

CAPT. Eight o'clock in the evening! 'tis a ſtrange time!

CON. Why ſo, honey? A fine evening is as good a time for a bad action as a fine morning; and if a man of ſenſe can be ſuch a fool as to fight a duel, he ſhou'd never ſleep upon the matter, for the more he thinks of it, the more he muſt feel himſelf aſham'd of his reſolution.

BEL. A pretty letter!

CON. O yes, an invitation to a brace of bullets is a very pretty thing.

BEL. For a challenge, however, 'tis very civilly written!

CON. Faith, if it was written to me, I ſhou'dn't be very fond of ſuch civility; I wonder he doesn't ſign himſelf, your moſt obedient ſervant.

CAPT.

CAPT. I told you Leeſon's character, and what wou'd become of this damn'd buſineſs; but your affairs—are they ſettled, Belville?

BEL. O they are always ſettled—for as this is a country where people occaſionally die, I take conſtant care to be prepared for contingencies.

CON. Occaſionally die!—I'll be very much oblig'd to you; Sir, if you tell me the country where people do not die? for I'll immediately go and end my days there.

BEL. Ha! ha! ha!

CON, Faith, you may laugh gintlemin, but tho' I am a fooliſh Iriſhman, and come about a fooliſh piece of buſineſs, I'd prefer a ſnug birth in this world, bad as it is, to the fineſt coffin in all Chriſtendom.

BEL. I am ſurpris'd, Sir, that thinking in this manner, you would be the bearer of a challenge.

CON. And well you may, Sir.—But we muſt often take a pleaſure in ſerving our friends, by doing things that are very diſagreeable to us.

CAPT. Then you think Mr. Leeſon much to blame, perhaps, for hazarding his life where he can by no means repair the honour of his ſiſter.

CON. Indeed and I do—But I ſhall think this gintleman, begging his pardon, much more to blame for meeting him.

BEL. And why ſo, Sir—You wouldn't have me diſappoint your friend?

CON. Faith, and that I wou'd—He, poor lad, may have ſome reaſon at preſent to be tir'd of the world, but you have a fine eſtate, a fine wife, a fine parcel of children.—In ſhort, honey, you have every thing to make you fond of living, and the devil burn me, was I in your caſe, if I'd ſtake my own happineſs againſt the miſery of any man.

BEL. I am very much oblig'd to your advice, Sir, tho' on the preſent occaſion I cannot adopt it; be ſo

good

good as to preſent my compliments to your friend, and tell him I ſhall certainly do myſelf the honour of attending his appointment.

CON. Why then upon my ſoul I am very ſorry for it.

CAPT. 'Tis not very cuſtomary, Sir, with gentlemen of Ireland to oppoſe an affair of honour.

CON. They are like the gintlemin of England, Sir, they are brave to a fault; yet I hope to ſee the day that it will be infamous to draw the ſwords of either, againſt any body but the enemies of their country.

[*Exit.*

BEL. I am quite charmed with this honeſt Hibernian, and would almoſt fight a duel for the pleaſure of his acquaintance.

CAPT. Come, ſtep with me a little, and let us conſider, whether there may not be ſome method of accommodating this curſed buſineſs.

BEL. Poh! don't be uneaſy upon my account; my character, with regard to affairs of this nature, is unhappily too well eſtabliſhed, and you may be ſure that I ſhan't fight with Leeſon.

CAPT. No---you have injured him greatly?

BEL. The very reaſon of all others why I ſhould not cut his throat. [*Exeunt.*

Enter SPRUCE.

SPRUCE. What, the devil, this maſter of mine has got a a duel upon his hands! Zounds! I am ſorry for that; he is a prince of a fellow! and a good ſubject muſt always love his prince, though he may now and then be a little out of humour with his actions.

Enter General SAVAGE.

GEN. Your hall-door ſtanding open, Spruce, and none of your ſentinels being on guard, I have ſurpriſed your camp thus far without reſiſtance: Where is your maſter?

SPRUCE.

SPRUCE. Juſt gone out with Captain Savage, Sir.

GEN. Is your lady at home?

SPRUCE. No, Sir, but Miſs Walſingham is at home; ſhall I inform her of your viſit?

GEN. There is no occaſion to inform her of it, for here ſhe is, Spruce. [*Exit Spruce.*

Enter Miſs WALSINGHAM.

Miſs WAL. General Savage, your moſt humble ſervant.

GEN. My dear Miſs Walſingham, it is rather cruel that you ſhould be left at home by yourſelf, and yet I am greatly rejoic'd to find you at preſent without company.

Miſs WAL. I can't but think myſelf in the beſt company, when I have the honour of your converſation, General.

GEN. You flatter me too much, Madam; yet I am come to talk to you on a ſerious affair, Miſs Walſingham; an affair of importance to me and to yourſelf: Have you leiſure to favour me with a ſhort audience, if I beat a parley?

Miſs WAL. Any thing of importance to you, Sir, is always ſufficient to command my leiſure.—'Tis as the Captain ſuſpected. (*aſide.*

GEN. You tremble, my lovely girl, but don't be alarmed; for though my buſineſs is of an important nature, I hope it won't be of a diſagreeable one.

Miſs WAL. And yet I am greatly agitated. (*aſide.*

GEN. Soldiers, Miſs Walſingham, are ſaid to be generally favour'd by the kind partiality of the ladies.

Miſs WAL. The ladies are not without gratitude, Sir, to thoſe who devote their lives peculiarly to the ſervice of their country.

GEN. Generouſly ſaid, Madam: Then give me leave, without any maſked battery, to aſk, if the heart of

of an honeſt ſoldier is a prize at all worth your acceptance.

Miſs WAL. Upon my word, Sir, there's no maſked battery in this queſtion.

GEN. I am as fond of a coup de main, Madam, in love, as in war, and hate the tedious method of ſapping a town, when there is a poſſibility of entering ſword in hand.

Miſs WAL. Why really, Sir, a woman may as well know her own mind, when ſhe is firſt ſummoned by the trumpet of a lover, as when ſhe undergoes all the tireſome formality of a ſiege. You ſee I have caught your own mode of converſing, General.

GEN. And a very great compliment I conſider it, Madam: But now that you have candidly confeſs'd an acquaintance with your own mind, anſwer me with that frankneſs for which every body admires you ſo much. Have you any objection to change the name of Walſingham?

Miſs WAL. Why then frankly, General Savage I ſay, no.

GEN. Ten thouſand thanks to you for this kind declaration.

Miſs WAL. I hope you won't think it a forward one.

GEN. I'd ſooner ſee my ſon run away in the day of battle;—I'd ſooner think Lord Ruſſell was bribed by Lewis the XIVth, and ſooner villify the memory of Algernoon Sidney.

Miſs WAL. How unjuſt it was ever to ſuppoſe the General a tyrannical father! *aſide.*

GEN. You have told me condeſcendingly, Miſs Walſingham, that you have no objection to change your name, I have but one queſtion more to aſk.

Miſs WAL. Pray propoſe it.

GEN. Would the name of Savage be diſagreeable to you?—Speak frankly again, my dear girl!

Miſs WAL. Why then again I frankly ſay, no.

GEN.

GEN. You make me too happy; and though I ſhall readily own, that a propoſal of this nature would come with more propriety from my ſon---

Miſs WAL. I am much better pleas'd that you make the propoſal yourſelf, Sir.

GEN. You are too good to me.—Torrington thought that I ſhould meet with a repulſe. *(aſide.*

Miſs WAL. Have you communicated this buſineſs to the Captain, Sir?

GEN. No, my dear Madam, I did not think that at all neceſſary. I have always been attentive to the Captain's happineſs, and I propoſe that he ſhall be married in a few days.

Miſs WAL. What, whether I will or no?

GEN. O you can have no objection.

Miſs WAL. I muſt be conſulted, however, about the day, General: but nothing in my power ſhall be wanting to make him happy.

GEN. Obliging loveliness!

Miſs WAL. You may imagine, that if I was not previouſly impreſt in favour of your propoſal, it wou'd not have met my concurrence ſo readily.

GEN. Then you own that I had a previous friend in the garriſon.

Miſs WAL. I don't bluſh to acknowledge it, when I conſider the accompliſhments of the object, Sir.

GEN. O this is too much, Madam; the principle merit of the object is his paſſion for Miſs Walſingham.

Miſs WAL. Don't ſay that, General, I beg of you, for I don't think there are many women in the kingdom, who could behold him with indifference.

GEN, Ah, you flattering, flattering angel!—and yet, by the memory of Marlborough, my lovely girl, it was the idea of a prepoſſeſſion on your part, which encouraged me to hope for a favourable reception.

Miſs

Miſs WAL. Then I muſt have been very indiſcreet, for I labour'd to conceal that prepoſſeſſion as much as poſſible.

GEN. You cou'dn't conceal it from me! you cou'dn't conceal it from me!—The female heart is a field which I am thoroughly acquainted with, and which has more than once been a witneſs to my victories, Madam.

Miſs WAL. I don't at all doubt your ſucceſs with the ladies, General; but as we now underſtand one another ſo perfectly, you will give me leave to retire.

GEN. One word, my dear creature, and no more; I ſhall wait upon you ſometime to day, with Mr. Torrington, about the neceſſary ſettlements.

Miſs WAL. You muſt do as you pleaſe, General, you are invincible in every thing.

GEN. And if you pleaſe, we'll keep every thing a profound ſecret, 'till the articles are all ſettled, and the definitive treaty ready for execution.

Miſs WAL. You may be ſure, that delicacy will not ſuffer me to be communicate on the ſubject, Sir.

GEN. Then you leave every thing to my management.

Miſs WAL. I can't truſt a more noble negociator. [*Exit.*

GEN. The day's my own. (*ſings.*) Britons, ſtrike home! ſtrike home! Revenge, &c. [*Exit ſinging.*

END *of the* SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE, *Miſs* LEESON'S *Lodgings.*

Enter Lady RACHEL MILDEW, *Mrs.* BELVILLE, *and Miſs* LEESON.

Lady RACH. WELL, Mrs. Belville, I am extremely glad you agree with me, in opinion of this young lady's qualifications for the ſtage. Don't you think ſhe'd play Miſs Headſtrong admirably in my comedy?

Mrs. BEL. Yes, indeed, I think ſhe poſſeſſes a natural fund of ſpirit, very much adapted to the character.—'Tis impoſſible, ſurely, that this hoyden can have a moment's attraction for Mr. Belville? *(aſide.*

Miſs LEES. You are very obliging, ladies; but I have no turn for comedy; my fort is tragedy entirely.

Alphonſo!—O, Alphonſo! to thee I call. &c.

Lady RACH. But, my dear, is there none of our comedies to your taſte?

Miſs LEES. O, yes; ſome of the ſentimental ones are very pretty, there's ſuch little difference between them and tragedies.

Lady RACH. And pray, my dear, how long have you been engaged to Mr. Frankly?

Miſs LEES. I only came away laſt night, and hav'n't ſeen Mr. Frankly ſince, tho' I expect him every moment.

Mrs. BEL. Laſt night! juſt as Mrs. Tempeſt mentioned. (*aſide.*

Lady RACH. You had the concurrence of your friends?

Miſs LEES. Not I, Madam. Mr. Frankly ſaid, I had too much genius to mind my friends, and as I ſhould want nothing from them, there was no occaſion to conſult them in the affair.

Lady RACH. Then Oſbaldiſton is not your real name, perhaps?

Miſs LEES. O no, nor do I tell my real name: I choſe Oſbaldiſton, becauſe it was a long one, and wou'd make a ſtriking appearance in the bills.

Mrs. BEL. I wiſh we cou'd ſee Mr. Frankly.

Miſs LEES. Perhaps you may, Madam, for he deſigns to give me a leſſon every day, 'till we are ready to ſet off for Ireland.

Lady RACH. Suppoſe then, my dear, you wou'd oblige us with a ſcene in Juliet, by way of ſhewing your proficiency to Mrs. Belville.

Miſs LEES. Will you ſtand up for Romeo?

Lady RACH. With all my heart, and I'll give you ſome inſtructions.

Miſs LEES. I beg pardon, Ma'am; I'll learn to act under nobody but Mr. Frankly. This room is without a carpet; if you will ſtep into the next, ladies, I'll endeavour to oblige you.

Shall I not be environed, diſtraught——

This way, Ladies.

Lady RACH. Pray, Madam, ſhew us the way.

[*Exeunt Miſs* LEES. *and Lady* RACH.

Mrs. BEL. I'll prolong this mummery as much as poſſible, in hopes the manager may come. Lye ſtill, poor fluttering heart! it cannot be the lord of all your wiſhes! it cannot ſurely be your ador'd Belville! [*Exit.*

Re-enter

Re-enter Miſs Leeſon.

Miſs Lees. Hav'n't I left my Romeo and Juliet here? O yes, there it is.

Enter Belville.

Bel. ——————*O, were thoſe eyes in heav'n,*
They'd thro' the ſtarry regions ſtream ſo bright,
That birds wou'd ſing, and think it was the morn!

Miſs Lees. Ah, my dear Mr. Frankly! I am ſo glad you are come! I was dying to ſee you.

Bel. Kiſs me, my dear;—why didn't you ſend me word of your intention to come away laſt night?

Miſs Lees. I hadn't time: but as I knew where the lodgings were, I thought I ſhou'd be able to find you by a note to the coffee-houſe I always directed to.

Bel. Kiſs me again, my little ſparkler!

Miſs Lees. Nay, I won't be kiſs'd in this manner; for tho' I am going on the ſtage, I intend to have ſome regard for my character. But, ha, ha, ha, I am glad you are come now: I have company above ſtairs.

Bel. Company! that's unlucky at this time, for I wanted to make you intirely eaſy about your character. *(aſide:)* And pray, my dear, who is your company? You know we muſt be very cautious for fear of your relations.

Miſs Lees. O, they are only ladies.—But one of them is the moſt beautiful creature in the world!

Bel. The devil ſhe is!

Miſs Lees. *An earth-treading ſtar, that makes dim heav'ns light.*

Bel. Zounds! I'll take a peep at the ſtar, who knows but I may have an opportunity of making another actreſs. *(aſide.*

Miſs Lees. Come, charmer! charmer!

Bel. ——————*Wer't thou as far*
As that vaſt ſhore, waſh'd by the fartheſt ſea,
I wou'd adventure for ſuch merchandize.

Now let's ſee what fortune has ſent us above ſtairs.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE *changes to a Dining-room at Miſs* LEESON'S.

Mrs. BELVILLE *and Lady* RACHEL *diſcover'd.*

Mrs. BEL. This is a moſt ignorant young creature, Lady Rachel.

Lady RACH. Why I think ſhe is—did you obſerve how ſhe ſlighted my offer of inſtructing her?

Enter Miſs LEESON.

Miſs LEES. Ladies!—ladies!—here he is! here is Mr. Frankly!

Enter Belville, *bowing very low, not ſeeing the Ladies.*

BEL. Ladies, your moſt obedient.

Mrs. BEL. Let me, if poſſible, recollect myſelf—Sir, your moſt obedient humble ſervant.

BEL. Zounds! let me out of the houſe.

Lady RACH. What do I ſee!

Miſs LEES. You ſeem, ladies, to know this gentleman?

Mrs. BEL. (*taking hold of him*) You ſhan't go renegade—You laugh'd at my credulity this morning, and I muſt now laugh at your embaraſſment.

BEL. What a kind thing it would be in any body to blow out my ſtupid brains?

Lady RACH. I'll mark this down for an incident in my comedy.

Miſs LEES. What do you hang your head for Mr. Frankley?

BEL.

BEL. Be ſo good as to aſk that lady, my dear.——The Devil has been long in my debt, and now he pays me home with a witneſs.

Mrs. BEL. What a cruel thing it is to let Mrs. Tempeſt out, my love, without ſomebody to take care of her!

Miſs LEES. What, do you know Mrs. Tempeſt, madam?

Mrs. BEL. Yes, my dear;——and I am pretty well acquainted with this gentleman.

Miſs LEES. What isn't this gentleman the manager of a play-houſe in Ireland?

BEL. The curtain is almoſt dropt my dear; the farce is nearly over, and you'll be ſpeedily acquainted with the cataſtrophe.

Enter Mrs. Tempeſt.

Mrs. TEMP. Yes, Sir, the curtain is almoſt dropt: I have had ſpies to watch your haunts, and the cataſtrophe ends in your detection.——Come, you abandon'd ſlut,——

Miſs LEES. And have I elop'd after all, without being brought upon the ſtage?

Mrs TEMP. I don't know that you would be brought upon the ſtage; but I am ſure you were near being brought upon the town. I hope, madam, for the future, you'll ſet me down a mad-woman.

[*to Mrs. Belville.*

Mrs. BEL. Mr. Belvill, you'll make my apologies to this lady, and acknowledge that I think her perfectly in her ſenſes.

BEL. I wiſh that I had intirely loſt mine.

Lady RACH. (*Writing*) *I wiſh that I had entirely loſt mine.* A very natural wiſh, in ſuch a ſituation.

Mrs. TEM. Come, you audacious minx, come away. You ſhall be ſent into Yorkſhire this very evening; and ſee what your poor mother will ſay to you, huſſey.

Miſs

Miſs LEES. I will go on the ſtage, if I die for't; and 'tis ſome comfort there's a play-houſe at York.

[*Exit Mrs.* Tempeſt *and Miſs* Leeſon.

BEL. Nancy, I am ſo aſham'd, ſo humbled, and ſo penitent, that if you knew what paſſes here, I am ſure you wou'd forgive me.

Mrs. BEL. My love, tho' I cannot ſay I rejoice in your infidelity, yet, believe me, I pity your diſtreſs: let us therefore think no more of this.

Lady RACH. (*Writing.*) *And think no more of this.* ——This conduct is new in a wife, and very dramatic.

BEL. Where, my angel, have you acquired ſo many requiſites to charm with?

Mrs. BEL. In your ſociety, my dear; and believe me ——that a wife may be as true a friend as any bottle companion upon earth, tho' ſhe can neither get merry with you over night, nor blow out your brains about ſome fooliſh quarrel in the morning.

BEL. If wives knew the omnipotence of virtue, where ſhe wears a ſmile upon her face, they'd all follow your bewitching example, and make a faithleſs huſband quite an incredible character.

Lady RACH. *Quite an incredible character!*—— Let me ſet down that. (*writing.*) [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *changes to General* SAVAGE'S.

Enter General and Captain.

GEN. Yes, Horace, I have been juſt viſiting at Belvill's.

CAPT. You found nobody at home, but Miſs Walſingham?

GEN. No, but I'd a long converſation with her, and upon a very intereſting ſubject.

CAPT 'Tis as I gueſs'd. [*aſide.*

GEN.

GEN. She is a moſt amiable creature, Horace.

CAPT. So ſhe is, Sir, and will make any man happy that marries her.

GEN. I am glad you think ſo.

CAPT. He's glad I think ſo!——'tis plain,—but I muſt leave every thing to himſelf, and ſeem wholly paſſive in the affair. [*aſide.*

GEN. A married life after all, Horace, I am now convinced is the moſt happy, as well as the moſt reputable.

CAPT. It is indeed, Sir.

GEN. Then perhaps you wou'd have no objection to be married, if I offered you as agreeable a young woman as Miſs Walſingham.

CAPT. 'Twou'd be my firſt pride on every occaſion, Sir, to pay an implicit obedience to your commands.

GEN. That's ſenſibly ſaid, Horace, and obligingly ſaid; prepare yourſelf therefore for an introduction to the lady in the morning.

CAPT. Is the lady prepar'd to receive me, Sir?

GEN. O yes; and you can't think how highly delighted Miſs Walſingham appeared, when I acquainted her with my reſolution on the ſubject.

CAPT. She's all goodneſs!

GEN. The more I know her, the more I am charm'd with her; I muſt not be explicit with him yet, for fear my ſecret ſhould get wind, and reach the ears of the enemy. [*aſide.*

GEN. I propoſe, Horace, that you ſhould be married immediately.

CAPT. The ſooner the better, Sir, I have no will but your's.

GEN. (*Shaking hands with him,*) By the memory of Malbro', you are a moſt excellent boy!——But what do you think? Miſs Walſingham inſiſts upon naming the day.

CAPT.

CAPT. And welcome, Sir; I am ſure ſhe won't make it a diſtant one.

GEN. O ſhe ſaid, that nothing in her power ſhou'd be wanting to make you happy.

CAPT. I am ſure of that, Sir.

GEN. [*A loud knocking*] Zounds, Horace! here's the diſgrace and puniſhment of my life: Let's avoid her as we would a fever in the camp.

CAPT. Come to the library, and I'll tell you how whimſically ſhe was treated this morning at Belville's.

GEN. Death and the devil! make haſte. O I muſt laugh at marriage, and be curſt to me! But I am providing, Horace, againſt your falling into my error.

CAPT. I am eternally indebted to you, Sir.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE, BELVILLE'S *Houſe.*

Enter Mrs. Belville *and Lady* Rachel.

Lady RACH. Nay; Mrs. Belville, I have no patience, you act quite unnaturally.

Mrs. BEL. What! becauſe I am unwilling to be miſerable?

Lady RACH. This new inſtance of Mr. Belville's infidelity——This attempt to ſeduce Miſs Walſingham, which your woman overheard, is unpardonable!

Mrs. BEL. I don't ſay but that I am ſtrongly wounded by his irregularities. Yet if Mr. Belville is unhappily a rover, I wou'd much rather that he ſhould have twenty miſtreſſes than one.

Lady RACH. You aſtoniſh me!

Mrs. BEL. Why, don't you know, my dear madam, that while he is divided amidſt a variety of objects, 'tis impoſſible for him to have a ſerious attachment?

Lady

Lady RACH. Lord, Mrs. Belville! how can you ſpeak with ſo much compoſure! a virtuous woman ſhould be always outrageous upon ſuch an occaſion as this.

Mrs. BEL. What, and weary the innocent ſun and moon from the firmament, like a deſpairing princeſs in a tragedy—No—no—Lady Rachel, 'tis bad enough to be indifferent to the man I love, without ſtudying to excite his averſion.

Lady RACH. How glad I am that Miſs Walſingham made him ſo heartily aſham'd of himſelf: Lord, theſe young men are ſo full of levity: Give me a huſband of Mr. Torrington's age, ſay I.

Mrs. BEL. And give me a huſband of Mr. Belville's, ſay I, with all his follies: However, Lady Rachel, I am pretty well ſatisfied that my conduct at Miſs Leeſon's will have a proper effect upon Mr. Belville's generoſity, and put an entire end to his galantries for the future.

Lady RACH. Don't deceive yourſelf, my dear.--- The gods in the ſhilling gallery would ſooner give up Roaſt Beef, or go without an epilogue on the firſt night of a new piece.

Mrs. BEL. Why ſhould you think ſo of ſuch a man as Mr. Belville?

Lady RACH. Becauſe Mr. Belville is a man: However, if you dare run the riſque---we will try the ſincerity of his reformation.

Mrs. BEL. If I dare run the riſque! I would ſtake my ſoul upon his honour.

Lady RACH. Then your poor ſoul would be in a very terrible ſituation.

Mrs. BEL. By what teſt can we prove his ſincerity?

Lady RACH. By a very ſimple one. You know I write ſo like Miſs Walſingham, that our hands are ſcarcely known aſunder.

Mrs. BEL. Well——

Lady RACH. Why then let me write to him as from her—

Mrs. BEL. If I did not think it would look like a doubt of his honour—

Lady RACH. Poh! dare you proceed upon my plan?—

Mrs. BEL. Moſt confidently: Come to my dreſſing-room, where you'll find every thing ready for writing, and then you may explain your ſcheme more particularly.

Lady RACH. I'll attend you, but I am really ſorry, my dear, for the love of propriety, to ſee you ſo calm under the perfidy of your huſband; you ſhould be quite wretched—indeed you ſhould. [*Ex.*

SCENE, *the Temple.*

Enter Leeſon.

LEES. The hell-hounds are after me.

Enter Connolly, *at the oppoſite ſide.*

Fly, open the chambers this moment, the bailiffs are in ſight.

CON. Faith and that I will; but it will be of no uſe to fly a ſtep, if I hav'n't the key.

LEES. Zounds! did not you lock the door?

CON. Yes; but I believe I left the key on the inſide: However, I ſee no more than three people, and think we could beat them to their hearts content in three minutes.

LEES. What! and fly in the face of the law?

CON. To be ſure you have a great regard for the law, when you are going to fight a duel!

LEES. S'death! is this a time to talk? Stay here, and throw every poſſible impediment in the way of theſe execrable raſcals. (*going.*)

CON.

CON. Holloa! honey, come back: Theſe execrable raſcals are very worthy people, I fancy, for they are quietly turning down the next court.

LEES. Their appearance alarm'd me beyond meaſure.

CON. O you ſhou'dn't judge by outſide ſhew, my dear; for there is no being a complete rogue, without the appearance of an honeſt man

LEES. Circumſtanced as I am at preſent, every thing terrifies me; for ſhould I be arreſted, the conſequence would poſſibly be fatal, both to my honour and my love.---Belville would proclaim me publicly a coward; and Emily ſet me down as a baſe, a mercenary adventurer, who was ſolely attracted by her fortune.

CON. Why faith, honey, like yourſelf, they might be apt to judge by appearances.

LEES. O, Connolly, a man of ſpirit ſhould learn prudence from his very pride, and conſider every unneceſſary debt he contracts as a wanton diminution of his character! the moment he makes another his creditor---he makes himſelf a ſlave! He runs the hazard of inſults, which he never can reſent, and of diſgraces which are ſeldom to be mitigated! He incurs the danger of being dragg'd, like the vileſt felon to the felon's priſon! and, ſuch is the depravity of the world, that guilt is even more likely to meet with advocates, than misfortune! [*Exit Leeſon.*

CON. Muſha, long life to you, ould Shillala!---I wiſh I had any thing beſides my carcaſe to venture for you, for that's nothing; yet you are as welcome to it as the flowersin May. Poor lad! I don't wonder that he is ſo much afraid of a priſon, for to be ſure it is a bleſſed place to live in; and a bleſſed law it muſt be, which coops a man up from every chance of getting money, by way of making him pay his debts---But now let my thick ſkull conſider, if there is any method of preventing this infernal duel. Suppoſe I have him

bound over to the pace! No, that will never do--it would be a ſhameful thing for a gintleman to keep the pace! Beſides, I muſt appear in the buſineſs, and people may think, from my connexion with him, that he has not honour enough to throw away his life: Suppoſe I go another way to work, and ſend an anonymous letter about the affair to Mrs. Belville; They ſay, though ſhe is a woman of faſhion, that no creter upon earth can be fonder of her huſband. Surely the good genius of Ireland put this ſcheme into my head---I'll about it this minute; and if there's only one of them kept from the field, I don't think that the other can be much hurt, when there will be no body to fight with him. [*Exit.*

SCENE, *changes to Capt.* SAVAGE'S *Lodgings.*

Enter Captain SAVAGE *and* BELVILLE.

CAPT. Why, faith, Belville, your detection, and ſo ſpeedily too, after all the pretended ſanctity of the morning, muſt have thrown you into a moſt humiliating ſituation.

BEL. Into the moſt diſtreſſing you can imagine: had my wife rav'd at my falſehood, in the cuſtomary manner, I cou'd have brazen'd it out pretty tollerably; but the angel-like ſweetneſs, with which ſhe bore the mortifying diſcovery, planted daggers in my boſom, and made me at that time wiſh her the verieſt vixen in the whole creation.

CAPT. Yet, the ſuffering forbearance of a wife, is a quality for which ſhe is ſeldom allow'd her merit; we think it her duty to put up with our falſehood, and imagine ourſelves exceedingly generous in the main, if we practiſe no other method of breaking her heart.

BEL. Monſtrous! monſtrous! from this moment I bid

I bid an everlaſting adieu to my vices; the generoſity of my dear girl——

Enter a Servant to BELVILLE.

SERV. Here's a letter, Sir, which Mr. Spruce has brought you.

BEL. Give me leave, Savage.—Zounds! what an induſtrious devil the father of darkneſs is, when the moment a man determines upon a good action, he ſends ſuch a thing as this, to ſtagger his reſolution.

CAPT. What have you got there?

BEL. You ſhall know preſently. Will you let Spruce come in.

CAPT. Where have you acquir'd all this ceremony?

BEL. Bid Spruce come in.

SERV. Yes, Sir. [*Exit.*

CAPT. Is that another challenge?

BEL. 'Tis upon my ſoul, but it came from a beautiful enemy, and dares me to give a meeting to Miſs Walſingham.

CAPT. How!

Enter SPRUCE.

BEL. Pray, Spruce, who gave you this letter?

SPRUCE. Miſs Walſingham's woman, Sir: ſhe ſaid it was about very particular buſineſs, and therefore I wou'dn't truſt it by any of the footmen.

CAPT. O, damn your diligence. (*aſide.*

BEL. You may go home, Spruce.

SPRUCE. (*Looking ſignificantly at his Maſter.*) Is there no anſwer neceſſary, Sir.

BEL. I ſhall call at home myſelf, and give the neceſſary anſwer.

SPRUCE. (*Aſide.*) What can be the matter with him all of a ſudden, that he is ſo cold upon the ſcent of wickedneſs? [*Exit.*

CAPT. And what anſwer do you propoſe making to it, Belville?

BEL.

BEL. Read the letter, and then tell me what I ſhou'd do.---You know Miſs Walſingham's hand.

CAPT. O, perfectly!---This is not---yes, it is her hand!---I have too many curſt occaſions to know it. (*aſide.*

BEL. What are you a muttering about?---Read the letter.

CAPT. *If you are not entirely diſcouraged, by our laſt converſation, from renewing the ſubject which* then *gave offence*——

BEL. *Which then gave offence.*---You ſee, Savage, that it is not offenſive any longer.

CAPT. Sdeath! you put me out.---*you may at the maſquerade, this evening*——

BEL. You remember how earneſt ſhe was for the maſquerade party.

CAPT. Yes, yes, I remember it well:---and I remember, alſo, how hurt ſhe was this morning, about the affair of Miſs Leeſon. (*aſide.*)——*have an opportunity of entertaining me*——O the ſtrumpet! (*aſide.*

BEL. But mind the cunning with which ſhe ſigns the note, for fear it ſhou'd by any accident fall into improper hands.

CAPT. Ay, and you put it into very proper hands. (*aſide.*) *I ſhall be in the blue domino.*---The ſignature is——---

YOU KNOW WHO.

BEL. Yes, *you know who.*

CAPT. May be, however, ſhe has only written this to try you.

BEL. To try me, for what purpoſe? But if you read a certain poſtcript there, I fancy you'll be of a different opinion.

CAPT. *If Mr. Belville has any houſe of character to retire to, it wou'd be moſt agreeable, as there cou'd be no fear of interruption.*

BEL. What do you ſay now?---Can you recommend

mend me to any houſe of character, where we ſhall be free from interruption.

CAPT. O, curſe her houſe of character! (*aſide*) But ſurely, Belville, after your late determin'd reſolution to reform---

BEL. Zounds! I forgot that.

CAPT. After the unexampled ſweetneſs of your wife's behaviour---

BEL. Don't go on, Savage: There is ſomething here (*putting his hand upon his boſom*) which feels already not a little aukwardly.

CAPT. And can you ſtill perſiſt?

BEL. I am afraid to anſwer your queſtion.

CAPT. Where the plague are you flying?

BEL. From the juſtice of your cenſure, Horace; my own is ſufficiently ſevere; yet I ſee that I ſhall be a raſcal again, in ſpite of my teeth; and good advice is only thrown away upon ſo incorrigible a libertine. [*Exit.*

CAPT. (*alone*) So then this diamond of mine proves a counterfeit after all, and I am really the verieſt wretch exiſting at the moment in which I conceiv'd myſelf the peculiar favourite of fortune. O the curſed, curſed ſex! I'll ſee her once more to upbraid her with her falſehood, then acquaint my father with her perfidy, to juſtify my breaking off the marriage, and tear her from my thoughts for ever.

Enter a Servant.

SERV. Sir! Sir! Sir!—

CAPT. Sir, Sir, Sir,—What the devil's the matter with the booby?

SERV. Miſs Walſingham, Sir!

CAPT. Ah! what of her?

SERV. Was this moment overturn'd at Mr. Belville's door, and John tells me carried in a fit into the houſe.

CAPT.

CAPT. Ha! let me fly to her aſſiſtance. [*Exit.*

SERV. *Ha let me fly to her aſſiſtance*—O, are you thereabouts. [*Exit.*

SCENE *changes to Mr.* BELVILLE'S.

Enter Mrs. Belville, *Miſs* Walſingham *and Lady* Rachel Mildew.

Mrs. BEL. But are you indeed recover'd my dear?

Miſs WAL. Perfectly my dear,—I wasn't in the leaſt hurt, tho' greatly terrified, when the two fools of coachmen contended for the honour of being firſt, and drove the carriages together with a violence incredible.

Lady RACH. I ſincerely rejoice at your eſcape; and now Mrs. Belville, as you promiſed to chooſe a dreſs for me if I went in your party to the maſquerade this evening, can you ſpare a quarter of an hour to Taviſtock-Street?

Mrs. BEL. I am loth to leave Miſs Walſingham alone, Lady Rachel, ſo ſoon after her fright.

Miſs WAL Nay, I inſiſt that you don't ſtay at home upon my account; and Lady Rachel's company to the maſquerade is a pleaſure I have ſuch an intereſt in, that I beg you won't delay a moment to oblige her.

Mrs. BEL. Well, then I attend your ladyſhip.

Lady RACH. You are very good; and ſo is Miſs Walſingham. [*Exit.*

Miſs WAL. I wonder Captain Savage ſtays away ſo long! where can he be all this time?—I die with impatience to tell him of my happy interview with the General.

Enter a Servant.

SERV. Captain Savage, madam.

Miſs

Miſs WAL. Shew him in. [*Exit Serv.*] How he muſt rejoice to find his conjectures ſo fortunately realiz'd.

Enter Captain Savage.

CAPT. So, madam, you have juſt eſcap'd a ſad accident

Miſs WAL. And by that agreeable tone and countenance, one would almoſt imagine you were very ſorry for my eſcape.

CAPT. People, madam, who doubt the kindneſs of others, are generally conſcious of ſome defect in themſelves.

Miſs WAL. Don't madam me, with this accent of indifference. What has put you out of humour?

CAPT. Nothing.

Miſs WAL. Are you indiſpos'd?

CAPT. The Croçodile! the Crocodile! [*aſide.*

Miſs WAL. Do you go to the maſquerade to night?

CAPT. No, but you do.

Miſs WAL. Why not? come, don't be ill-natur'd, I'm not your wife yet.

CAPT. Nor ever will be, I promiſe you.

Miſs WAL. What is the meaning of this very whimſical behaviour?

CAPT. The ſettled compoſure of her impudence is intolerable. (*aſide.*) Madam, Madam, how have I deſerv'd this uſage?

Miſs WAL. Nay, Sir, Sir, how have I deſerved it, if you go to that?

CAPT. The letter, madam!——the letter!

Miſs WAL. What letter?

CAPT. Your letter, inviting a gallant from the maſquerade to a houſe of character, madam!——What, you appear ſurpriz'd?

Miſs WAL. Well I may, at ſo ſhameleſs an aſperſion.

CAPT. Madam, madam, I have ſeen your letter!

Your new lover cou'dn't keep your ſecret a moment. But I have nothing to do with you,—and only come to declare my reaſons for renouncing you everlaſtingly!

Enter Servant.

SERV. General Savage, madam.

Miſs WAL. Shew him up. [*Exit Serv.*] I am glad he is come, Sir; inform him of your reſolution to break off the match, and let there be an end of every thing between us.

Enter General Savage.

GEN. The news of your accident reach'd me but this moment, madam,——or I ſhou'd have poſted much ſooner to reconnoitre your ſituation. My aid de camp, however, has not been inattentive I ſee, and I dare ſay his diligence will not be the leaſt leſſen'd, when he knows his obligations to you.

CAPT. O, Sir, I am perfectly ſenſible of my obligations; and the conſciouſneſs of them, was one motive of my coming here.

GEN. Then you have made your acknowledgements to miſs Wa ſingham I hope.

Miſs WAL. He has indeed, General, ſaid a great deal more than was neceſſary.

GEN. That opinion proceeds from the liberality of your temper; for 'tis impoſſible he can ever ſay enough of your goodneſs.

CAPT. So it is; if you knew but all, Sir.

GEN. Why who can know more of the matter than myſelf?

Miſs WAL. This gentleman, it ſeems, has ſomething, General Savage, very neceſſary for your information.

GEN. How's this?

CAPT. Nay, Sir, I only ſay, that for ſome particular reaſons, which I ſhall communicate to you at a

more proper time; I muſt beg leave to decline the lady whoſe hand you kindly intended for me this morning.

GEN. O you muſt!—Why then I hope you decline at the ſame time, all pretenſions to every ſhilling of my fortune. It is not in my power to make you fight, you paltroon, but I can puniſh you for cowardice.

Miſs WAL. Nay, but General, let me interpoſe here. If he can maintain any charge againſt the lady's repuation, 'twould be very hard that he ſhould be diſinherited, for a neceſſary attention to his honour.

CAPT. And if I don't make the charge good, I ſubmit to be diſinherited without murmurring.

GEN. 'Tis falſe as hell! the lady is infinitely too good for you, in every reſpect; and I undervalued her worth, when I thought of her for your wife.

Miſs WAL. I am ſure the lady is much oblig'd to your favourable opinion, Sir.

GEN. Not in the leaſt, Madam; I only do her common juſtice.

CAPT. I cannot bear that you ſhou'd be diſpleas'd a moment, Sir; ſuffer me therefore to render the converſation leſs equivocable, and a few words will explain every thing.

GEN. Sirrah, I'll hear no explanation; an't my orders that you ſhou'd marry?

Miſs WAL. For my ſake hear him, General Savage.

CAPT. Madam, I diſdain every favour that is to be procur'd by your interpoſition. [*Exit.*

Miſs WAL. This matter muſt not be ſuffer'd to proceed farther tho', provokingly, cruelly as the Captain has behav'd. (*aſide.*

GEN. What's that you ſay, my bewitching girl?

Miſs WAL. I ſay that you muſt make it up with the Captain, and the beſt way will be to hear his charge patiently.

CEN.

GEN. I am ſhock'd at the brutality of the dog; he has no more principle than a ſuttler, and no more ſteadineſs than a young recruit upon drill. But, you ſhall have ample ſatisfaction :---this very day I'll cut him off from a poſſibility of ſucceeding to a ſhilling of my fortune. He ſhall be as miſerable as——

Miſs WAL. Dear General, do you think that this wou'd give me any ſatisfaction?

GEN. How he became acquainted with my deſign I know not, but I ſee plainly, that his mutiny proceeds from his averſion to my marrying again.

Miſs WAL. To your marrying again, Sir! why ſhou'd he object to that?

GEN. Why, for fear I ſhould have other children, to be ſure.

Miſs WAL. Indeed, Sir, it was not from that motive; and, if I can overlook his folly, you may be prevail'd upon to forgive it.

GEN. After what you have ſeen, juſtice ſhou'd make you a little more attentive to your own intereſt, my lovely girl.

Miſs WAL. What at the expence of his?

GEN. In the approaching change of your ſituation, there may be a family of your own.

Miſs WAL. Suppoſe there ſhou'd, Sir; won't there be a family of his too?

GEN. I care not what becomes of his family.

Miſs WAL. But, pray let me think a little about it, General.

GEN. 'Tis hard, indeed, when I was ſo deſirous of promoting his happineſs, that he ſhould throw any thing in the way of mine.

Miſs WAL. Recollect, Sir, his offence was wholly confin'd to me.

GEN. Well, my love, and isn't it throwing an obſtacle in the way of my happineſs, when he abuſes you ſo groſly for your readineſs to marry me?

Miſs WAL. Sir!——

GEN.

GEN. I ſee, with all your good nature, that this is a queſtion you cannot rally againſt.

Miſs WAL. It is indeed, Sir.---What will become of me? (*aſide.*

GEN. You ſeem ſuddenly diſordered, my love?

Miſs WAL. Why really, Sir, this affair affects me ſtrongly.

GEN. Well, it is poſſible, that for your ſake, I may not puniſh him with as much ſeverity as I intended: In about an hour I ſhall beg leave to beat up your quarters again, with Mr. Torrington; for 'tis neceſſary I ſhould ſhew you ſome proof of my gratitude, ſince you have been ſo kindly pleas'd to honour me with a proof of your affection.

Miſs WAL. (*aſide.*) So, now indeed, we're in a hopeful ſituation. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE, *an Apartment at* BELVILLE'S.

Enter Mrs. Belville, *and Captain* Savage.

Mrs. BEL. DON'T argue with me, Captain Savage; but conſider that I am a wife, and pity my diſtraction.

CAPT. Dear Madam, there is no occaſion to be ſo much alarm'd; Mr. Belville has very properly determin'd not to fight; he told me ſo himſelf, and ſhould have been effectually prevented, if I hadn't known his reſolution.

Mrs. BEL. There is no knowing to what extremities he may be provok'd, if he meets Mr. Leeſon; I have ſent for you, therefore, to beg that you will ſave him from the poſſibility, either of expoſing himſelf to any danger, or of doing an injury to his adverſary.

CAPT.

CAPT. What would you have me do, Madam?

Mrs. BEL. Fly to Hyde-park, and prevent, if yet poſſible, his meeting with Mr. Leeſon: Do it, I conjure you, if you'd ſave me from deſperation.

CAPT. Though you have no reaſon whatever to be apprehenſive for his ſafety, Madam, yet, ſince you are ſo very much affected, I'll immediately execute your commands. [*Exit.*

Mrs. BEL. Merciful heaven! where is the generoſity, where is the ſenſe, where is the ſhame of men, to find a pleaſure in purſuits, which they cannot remember without the deepeſt horror; which they cannot follow without the meaneſt fraud; and which they cannot effect, without conſequences the moſt dreadful? The ſingle word, Pleaſure, in a maſculine ſenſe, comprehends every thing that is cruel; every thing that is baſe; and every thing that is deſperate: Yet men, in other reſpects, the nobleſt of their ſpecies, make it the principal buſineſs of their lives, and do not heſitate to break in upon the peace of the happieſt families, though their own muſt be neceſſarily expos'd to deſtruction.----O Belville! Belville!---my life! my love!--The greateſt triumph which a libertine can ever experience, is too deſpicable to be envied; 'tis at beſt nothing but a victory over his own humanity; and if he is a huſband, he muſt be dead indeed, if he is not doubly tortured upon the wheel of recollection.

Enter Miſs WALSINGHAM *and Lady* RACHEL MILDEW.

Miſs WAL. My dear Mrs. Belville, I am extremely unhappy to ſee you ſo diſtreſs'd.

Lady RACH. Now, I am extremely glad to ſee her ſo, for if ſhe wasn't greatly diſtreſs'd it wou'd be monſtrouſly unnatural.

Mrs. BEL. O, Matilda!---my huſband! my huſband! my children! my children!

Miſs WAL. Don't weep, my dear! don't weep! pray be comforted, all may end happily. Lady Rachel, beg of her not to cry ſo.

Lady

Lady RACH. Why, you are crying yourſelf, Miſs Walſingham; and tho' I think it out of character to encourage her tears, I can't help keeping you company.

Mrs. BEL. O, why is not ſome effectual method contriv'd, to prevent this horrible practice of duelling?

Lady RACH. I'll expoſe it on the ſtage, ſince the law now a-days, kindly leaves the whole cognizance of it to the theatre.

Miſs WAL. And yet if the laws againſt it, were as well enforced as the laws againſt deſtroying the game, perhaps it would be equally for the benefit of the kingdom.

Mrs. BEL. No law will ever be effectual till the cuſtom is render'd infamous.---Wives muſt ſhriek!---mothers muſt agonize!---orphans muſt multiply!---unleſs ſome bleſſed hand ſtrips the faſcinating glare from honourable murder, and bravely expoſes the idol who is worſhip'd thus in blood. While it is diſreputable to obey the laws, we cannot look for reformation:---But if the duelliſt is once baniſhed from the preſence of his ſovereign;---if he is for life excluded the confidence of his country;---if a mark of indelible diſgrace is ſtamp'd upon him, the ſword of publick juſtice will be the ſole chaſtiſer of wrongs; trifles will not be puniſh'd with death, and offences really meriting ſuch a puniſhment, will be reſerv'd for the only proper avenger, the common executioner.

Lady RACH. I cou'dn't have expreſs'd myſelf better on the ſubject, my dear: but till ſuch a hand as you talk of is found, the beſt will fall into the error of the times.

Miſs WAL. Yes, and butcher each other like madmen, for fear their courage ſhould be ſuſpected by fools.

Mrs. BEL. No news yet from Captain Savage?

Lady RACH. He can't have reach'd Hyde-park yet, my dear.

Miſs WAL. Let us lead you to your chamber, my dear; you'll be better there.

Mrs.

Mrs. BEL. Matilda, I muſt be wretched any where; but I'll attend you.

Lady RACH. Thank heav'n, I have no huſband to plunge me into ſuch a ſituation!

Miſs WAL. And, if I thought I cou'd keep my reſolution, I'd determine this moment on living ſingle all the days of my life. Pray don't ſpare my arm, my dear. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *Hyde Park.*

Enter BELVILLE.

BEL. I fancy I am rather before the time of appointment; engagements of this kind are the only ones, in which, now-a-days, people pretend, to any punctuality:---a man is allow'd half an hours law to dinner, but a thruſt through the body muſt be given within a ſecond of the clock.

Enter Leeſon.

LEES. Your ſervant, Sir.---Your name I ſuppoſe is Belville?

BEL. Your ſuppoſition is very right, Sir; and I fancy I am not much in the wrong, when I ſuppoſe your name to be Leeſon.

LEES. It is, Sir; I am ſorry I ſhou'd keep you here a moment.

BEL. I am very ſorry, Sir, you ſhou'd bring me here at all.

LEES. I regret the occaſion, be aſſured, Sir; but 'tis not now a time for talking, we muſt proceed to action.

BEL. And yet talking is all the action I ſhall proceed to, depend upon it.

LEES. What do you mean, Sir? Where are your piſtols?

BEL. Where I intend they ſhall remain till my next journey into the country, very quietly over the chimney in my dreſſing room.

LEES. You treat this matter with too much levity, Mr. Belville; take your choice of mine, Sir.

BEL.

BEL. I'd rather take them both, if you pleaſe, for then no miſchief ſhall be done with either of them.

LEES. Sir, this trifling is adding inſult to injury; and ſhall be reſented accordingly. Didn't you come here to give me ſatisfaction?

BEL. Yes, every ſatisfaction in my power.

LEES. Take one of theſe piſtols then.

BEL. Come, Mr. Leeſon, your bravery will not at all be leſſen'd by the exerciſe of a little underſtanding: If nothing leſs than my life can atone for the injury I have unconſciouſly done you, fire at me inſtantly, but don't be offended becauſe I decline to do you an additional wrong.

LEES. S'death, Sir, do you think I come here with an intention to murder?

BEL. You come to arm the guilty againſt the innocent, Sir; and that, in my opinion, is the moſt atrocious intention of murder.

LEES. How's this?---

BEL. Look'e, Mr. Leeſon, there's your piſtol *(throws it on the ground)* I have already acted very wrongly with reſpect to your ſiſter, but, Sir, I have ſome character (though perhaps little enough) to maintain, and I will not do a ſtill worſe action, in raiſing my hand againſt your life.

LEES. This hypocritical cant of cowardice, Sir, is too palpable to diſarm my reſentment; though I held you to be a man of profligate principles, I nevertheleſs conſider'd you as a man of courage; but, if you heſitate a moment longer, by heaven, I'll chaſtiſe you on the ſpot. *(Draws.)*

BEL. I muſt defend my life; though if it did not look like timidity, I would inform you—*(they fight, Leeſon is diſarmed)*—Mr. Leeſon, there is your ſword again.

LEES. Strike it through my boſom, Sir;---I don't deſire to out-live this inſtant,

BEL. I hope, my dear Sir, that you will long live

happy—as your ſiſter, tho' to my ſhame I can claim no merit on that account, is recovered unpolluted, by her family; but let me beg that you will now ſee the folly of deciſions by the ſword, when ſucceſs is not fortunately chain'd to the ſide of juſtice: Before I leave you, receive my ſincereſt apologies for the injuries I have done you; and, be aſſured, no occurrence will ever give me greater pleaſure, than an opportunity of ſerving you, if, after what is paſt, you ſhall at any time condeſcend to uſe me as a friend. [*Ex.*

LEES. Very well---very well---very well.

Enter Connolly.

LEES. What, you have been within hearing, I ſup-
CON. You may ſay that. [poſe?

LEES. And isn't this very fine?

CON. Why I can't ſay much as to the finery of it, Sir, but it is certainly very fooliſh.

LEES. And ſo this is my ſatisfaction after all!

CON. Yes, and pretty ſatisfaction it is. When Mr. Belville did you but one injury, he was the greateſt villain in the world; but now that he has done you two, in drawing his ſword upon you, I ſuppoſe he is a very worthy gentleman

LEES. To be foil'd, baffled, diſappointed in my revenge!—What tho' my ſiſter is by accident unſtain'd, his intentions are as criminal, as if her ruin was actually perpetrated; there is no poſſibility of enduring the reflection!---I wiſh not for the blood of my enemy, but I would at leaſt have the credit of giving him life.

CON. Arrah, my dear, if you had any regard for the life of your enemy, you ſhou'dn't put him in the way of death.

LEES. No more of theſe reflections, my dear Connolly; my own feelings are painful enough. Will you be ſo good as to take theſe damn'd piſtols, and come with me to the coach?

CON. Troth and that I will; but don't make your-
ſelf

ſelf uneaſy; conſider that you have done every thing which honour required at yous hands.

LEES. I hope ſo.

CON. Why you know ſo: You have broke the laws of heaven and earth, as nobly as the firſt lord in the land, and you have convinc'd the world, that where any body has done your family one injury, you have courage enough to do it another yourſelf, by hazarding your life.

LEES. Thoſe, Connolly, who would live reputably in any country, muſt regulate their conduct in many caſes by its very prejudices.---Cuſtom, with reſpect to duelling, is a tyrant, whoſe deſpotiſm no body ventures to attack, tho' every body deteſts its cruelty.

CON. I didn't imagine that a tyrant of any kind would be tolerated in England. But where do you think of going now? For chambers, you know, are at preſent moſt delightfully dangerous.

LEES. I ſhall go to Mrs. Crayon's.

CON. What the gentlewoman that paints all manner of colours in red chalk?

LEES. Yes, where I firſt became acquainted with Emily.

CON. And where the ſweet creature has met you two or three times under pretence of ſitting for her picture.

LEES. Mrs. Crayons will, I dare ſay, oblige me in this exigency with an apartment for a few days; but come, Connolly, we have no time to loſe, tho' if you had any prudence, you would abandon me in my preſent ſituation.

CON. Ah, Sir, is this your opinion of my friendſhip? Do you think that any thing can ever give me half ſo much pleaſure in ſerving you, as ſeeing you ſurrounded by misfortunes. [*Exeunt.*

The Scene changes to an Apartment at Belville's.

Enter General Savage, Torrington, *and* Spruce.

SPRUCE. Miſs Walſingham will wait on you immediately, gentlemen.

GEN. Very well.

SPRUCE. (*aſide*) What can old Holifernes want ſo continually with Miſs Walſingham? [*Exit*

GEN. When I bring this ſweet mild creature home, I ſhall be able to break her ſpirit to my own wiſhes--I'll inure her to proper diſcipline from the firſt moment, and make her tremble at the very thought of mutiny.

TOR. Ah, General, you are wonderfully brave, when you know the meekneſs of your adverſary.

GEN. Envy, Torrington-----ſtark, ſtaring envy: few fellows, on the borders of fifty, have ſo much reaſon as myſelf, to boaſt of a blooming young woman's partiality.

TOR. On the borders of fifty, man!---beyond the confines of threeſcore.

GEN. The more reaſon I have to boaſt of my victory then; but don't grumble at my triumph, you ſhall have a kiſs of the bride, let that content you, Torrington.

Enter Miſs Walſingham.

Miſs WAL. Gentlemen, your moſt obedient: General, I intended writing to you about a trifling miſtake; but poor Mrs. Belville has been ſo very ill, that I cou'dn't find an opportun ty.

GEN. I am very ſorry for Mrs. Belville's illneſs, but I am happy, Madam, to be perſonally in the way of receiving your commands, and I wait upon you with Mr. Torrington, to talk about a marriage ſettlement

Miſs WAL. Heavens! how ſhall I undeceive him? (*aſide.*

TOR. 'Tis rather an aukward buſineſs, Miſs Walſingham, to troub'e you upon; but as the General wiſhes that the affair may be as private as poſſible, he thought it better to ſpeak to yourſelf, than to treat with any other perſon.

GEN. Yes, my lovely girl; and to convince you, that

that I intend to carry on an honourable war, not to pillage like a free-booter, Mr. Torrington will be a truſtee.

Miſs WAL. I am infinitely oblig'd to your intention, but there's no neceſſity to talk about any ſettlement—for—

GEN. Pardon me, Madam,—pardon me, there is—beſides, I have determin'd that there ſhall be one, and what I once determine is abſolute.—A tolerable hint for her own behaviour, when I have married her, Torrington. (*aſide to Tor.*

Miſs WAL. I muſt not ſhock him before Mr. Torrington (*aſide*). General Savage, will you give me leave to ſpeak a few words in private to you.

GEN. There is no occaſion for ſounding a retreat, Madam; Mr. Torrington is acquainted with the whole buſineſs, and I am determin'd, for your ſake, that nothing ſhall be done without him.

TOR. I can have no objection to your hearing the lady ex parte, General.

Miſs WAL. What I have to ſay, Sir, is of a very particular nature.

TOR. (*riſing*) I'll leave the room then.

GEN. (*oppoſing him*) You ſhan't leave the room, Torrington. Miſs Walſingham ſhall have a ſpecimen of my command, even before marriage, and you ſhall ſee, that every woman is not to bully me out of my determination. (*aſide to Tor.*)

Miſs WAL. Well, General, you muſt have your own way.

GEN. (*to Tor.*) Don't you ſee that it's only fighting the battle ſtoutly at firſt, with one of theſe gentle creatures?

TOR. (*ſignificantly*) Ah, General!

GEN. I own, Madam, your ſituation is a diſtreſſing one; let us ſit down—let us ſit down—

Miſs WAL. It is unſpeakably diſtreſſing indeed, Sir.

TOR. Diſtreſſing however as it may be, we muſt proceed

ceed to iſſue, Madam; the General propoſes your jointure to be 1000 l. a year.

Miſs WAL. General Savage!

GEN. You think this too little, perhaps?

Miſs WAL. I can't think of any jointure, Sir.

TOR. Why to be ſure, a jointure it at beſt but a melancholly poſſeſſion, for it muſt be purchaſed by the loſs of the huſband you love.

Miſs WAL. Pray don't name it, Mr. Torrington.

GEN. (*kiſſing her hand*) A thouſand thanks to you, my lovely girl.

Miſs WAL. For heaven's ſake, let go my hand.

GEN. I ſhall be mad 'till it gives me legal poſſeſſion of the town.

Miſs WAL. Gentlemen---General---Mr. Torrington---I beg you'll hear me.

GEN. By all means, my adorable creature; I can never have too many proofs of your diſintereſted affection.

Miſs WAL. There is a capital miſtake in this whole affair---I am ſinking under a load of diſtreſs.

GEN. Your confuſion makes you look charmingly though.

Miſs WAL. There is no occaſion to talk of jointures or marriages to me; I am not going to be married.

TOR. What's this?

Miſs WAL. Nor have I an idea in nature, however enviable I think the honour, of being your wife, Sir.

GEN. Madam!

TOR. Why here's a demur!

Miſs WAL. I am afraid, Sir, that in our converſation this morning, my confuſion ariſing from the particularity of the ſubject, has led you into a material miſconception.

GEN. I am thunderſtruck, madam! I cou'dn't miſtake my ground.

TOR. As clear a *nol: proſ:* as ever was iſſued by an attorney general.

GEN. Surely you can't forget, that at the firſt word you hung out a flag of truce, told me even that

that I had a previous friend in the fort, and didn't ſo much as hint at a ſingle article of capitulation?

TOR. Now for the rejoinder to this replication.

Miſs WAL. All this is unqueſtionably true, General, and perhaps a good deal more; but in reality my confuſion before you on this ſubject to day, was ſuch, that I ſcarcely knew what I ſaid; I was dying with diſtreſs, and at this moment am very little better;—permit me to retire, General Savage, and only ſuffer me to add, that tho' I think myſelf highly flatter'd by your addreſſes, it is impoſſible for me ever to receive them. Lord! Lord! I am glad its over in any manner. [*Ex.*

TOR. Why, we are a little out in this matter, General; the judge has decided againſt us, when we imagin'd ourſelves ſure of the cauſe.

GEN. The gates ſhut in my teeth, juſt as I expected the keys from the governor.

TOR. I am diſappointed myſelf, man; I ſhan't have a kiſs of the bride.

GEN. At my time of life too!

TOR. I ſaid from the firſt you were too old for her.

GEN. Zounds to fancy myſelf ſure of her, and to triumph upon a certainty of victory.

TOR. Ay, and to kiſs her hand in a raptulrous return for her tenderneſs to you:—let me adviſe you never to kiſs before folks, as long as you live again.

GEN. Don't diſtract me, Torrington! a joke, where a friend has the misfortune to loſe the battle, is a downright inhumanity.

TOR. You told me that your ſon had accus'd her of ſomething that you would not hear; ſuppoſe we call at his lodgings, he perhaps, as an *amicus-curiæ*, may be able to give us a little information.

GEN. Thank you for the thought;—But keep your finger more than ever upon you lips, dear Torrington. You know how I dread the danger of ridicule, and it wou'd be too much, not only to be thraſh'd out of the field, but to be laugh'd at into the bargain.

TOR.

TOR. I thought when you made a preſentment of your ſweet perſon to Miſs Walſingham, that the bill wou'd be return'd ignoramus. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, BELVILLE'S.

Mrs. BELVILLE *and Lady* RACHEL MILDEW, *diſcovered on a Sopha.*

Lady RACH. You heard what Captain Savage ſaid?

Mrs. BEL. I would flatter myſelf, but my heart will not ſuffer it; the Park might be too full for the horrid purpoſe, and perhaps they are gone to decide the quarrel in ſome other place.

Lady RACH. The Captain enquir'd of numbers in the Park without hearing a ſyllable of them, and is therefore poſitive that they are parted without doing any miſchief.

Mrs. BEL. I am, nevertheleſs, torn by a thouſand apprehenſions, and my fancy, with a gloomy kind of fondneſs, faſtens on the moſt deadly, This very morning, I exultingly numbered myſelf in the catalogue of the happieſt wives.—Perhaps I am a wife no longer;—perhaps, my little innocents, your unhappy father is at this moment breathing his laſt ſigh, and wiſhing, O, how vainly! that he had not prefer'd a guilty pleaſure to his own life, to my eternal peace of mind, and your felicity!

Enter SPRUCE.

SPRUCE. Madam! madam! my maſter! my maſter!

Mrs. BEL. Is he ſafe?

Enter BELVILLE.

BEL. My love!

Mrs. BEL. O Mr. Belville! (*faints.*

BEL. Aſſiſtance, quick!

Lady RACH. There ſhe revives.

BEL. The angel-ſoftneſs! how this rends my heart?

Mrs. BEL. O, Mr. Belville, if you cou'd conceive the

the agonies I have endur'd, you would avoid the poſſibility of another quarrel as long as you liv'd, out of common humanity.

BEL. My deareſt creature, ſpare theſe tender reproaches; you know not how ſufficiently I am puniſh'd to ſee you thus miſerable.

Lady RACH. That's pleaſant indeed, when you have yourſelf deliberately loaded her with affliction.

BEL. Pray, pray Lady Rachel, have a little mercy: Your poor humble ſervant has been a very naughty boy,--but if you only forgive him this ſingle time, he will never more deſerve the rod of correction.

Mrs. BEL. Since you are return'd ſafe, I am happy. Excuſe theſe fooliſh tears, they guſh in ſpite of me.

BEL. How contemptible do they render me, my love!

Lady RACH. Come, my dear, you muſt turn your mind from this gloomy ſubject.—Suppoſe we ſtep up ſtairs and communicate our pleaſure to Miſs Walſingham?

Mrs. BEL. With all my heart. Adieu, recreant!

[*Exeunt Mrs.* Bel. *and Lady* Rach.

BEL. I don't deſerve ſuch a woman, I don't deſerve her.—Yet, I believe I am the firſt huſband, that ever found fault with a wife, for having too much goodneſs.

Enter SPRUCE.

What's the matter?

SPRUCE. Your ſiſter——

BEL. What of my ſiſter?

SPRUCE. Sir, is elop'd.

BEL. My ſiſter!

SPRUCE. There is a letter left, Sir, in which ſhe ſays, that her motive was a diſlike to a match with Captain Savage, as ſhe has plac'd her affections unalterably on another gentleman.

BEL. Death and damnation!

SPRUCE. Mrs. Moreland, your mother, is in the greateſt diſtreſs, Sir, and begs you will immediately

go with the ſervant that brought the meſſage; for he obſerving the young lady's maid carrying ſome bundles out, a little ſuſpicicuſly, thought there muſt be ſome ſcheme going on, and dogg'd a hackney coach, in which Miſs Morland went off, to the very houſe where it ſet her down.

BEL. Bring me to the ſervant, inſtantly;—but don't let a ſyllable of this matter reach my wife's ears, her ſpirits are already too much agitated. [*Exit.*

SPRUCE. Zounds! we ſhall be paid home, for the tricks we have play'd in other families. [*Exit.*

Scene changes to Capt. SAVAGE'S *Lodgings.*

Enter Captain SAVAGE.

CAPT. The vehemence of my reſentment againſt this abandon'd woman has certainly led me too far. I ſhou'dn't have acquainted her with my diſcovery of her baſeneſs;—no, if I had acted properly, I ſhould have conceal'd all knowledge of the tranſaction 'till the very moment of her guilt, and then burſt upon her when ſhe was ſolacing with her paramour, in all the fulneſs of ſecurity. Now, if ſhe ſhould either alter her mind, with reſpect to going to the maſquerade, or go in a different habit to elude my obſervation, I not only loſe the opportunity of expoſing her, but give her time to plan ſome plauſible excuſe for her infamous letter to Belville.

Enter a Servant.

SER. General Savage, and Mr. Torrington, Sir.

CAPT. You blockhead, why did you let them wait a moment? What can be the meaning of this viſit? [*Ex. Servant.*

Enter General SAVAGE, *and* TORRINGTON.

GEN. I come, Horace, to talk to you about Miſs Walſingham.

CAPT

CAPT. She's the moſt worthleſs woman exiſting, Sir: I can convince you of it.

GEN. I have already chang'd my own opinion of her.

CAPT. What you have found her out yourſelf, Sir?

TOR. Yes, he has made a trifling diſcovery.

GEN. S'death, don't make me contemptible to my ſon. (*aſide to* TOR.

CAPT. But, Sir, what inſtance of her precious behaviour has come to your knowledge? For an hour has ſcarcely elapſed, ſince you thought her a miracle of goodneſs

TOR. Ay, he has thought her a miracle of goodneſs, within this quarter of an hour.

GEN. Why ſhe has a manner that wou'd impoſe upon all the world.

CAPT. Yes, but ſhe has a manner alſo to undeceive the world thoroughly.

TOR. That we have found pretty recently; however, in this land of liberty, none are to be pronounced guilty, 'till they are poſitively convicted; I can't therefore find againſt Miſs Walſingham, upon the bare ſtrength of preſumptive evidence.

CAPT. Preſumptive evidence! hav'n't I promis'd you ocular demonſtration?

TOR. Ay, but 'till we receive this demonſtration, my good friend, we cannot give judgement.

CAPT. Then I'll tell you at once, who is the object of her honourable affections.

GEN. Who— who—

CAPT. What would you think if they were plac'd on Belville?

GEN. Upon Belville! has ſhe deſerted to him from the corps of virtue?

CAPT. Yes, ſhe wrote to him, deſiring to be taken from the maſquerade to ſome convenient ſcene of privacy, and tho' I have ſeen the letter, ſhe has the impudence to deny her own hand.

GEN. What a fiend is there then diſguis'd under the uniform of an angel!

TOR.

TOR. The delicate creature that was dying with confuſion!

CAPT. Only come with me to the maſquerade, and you ſhall ſee Belville carry her off: 'Twas about the ſcandalous appointment with him, I was ſpeaking, when you conceiv'd I treated her ſo rudely.

GEN. And you were only anxious to ſhew her in her real character to me, when I was ſo exceedingly offended with you.

CAPT. Nothing elſe in the world, Sir; I knew you would deſpiſe and deteſt her, the moment you were acquainted with her baſeneſs.

GEN. How ſhe brazen'd it out before my face, and what a regard ſhe affected for your intereſt! I was a madman not to liſten then to your explanation.

TOR. Tho' you both talk this point well, I ſtill ſee nothing but ſtrong preſumption againſt Miſs Walſingham: Miſtakes have already happened, miſtakes may happen again; and I will not give up a lady's honour, upon an evidence that wou'd not caſt a common pick-pocket at the Old Baily.

CAPT. Come to the maſquerade then and be convinc'd.

GEN. Let us detach a party for dreſſes immediately. Yet remember, Torrington, that the punctuality of evidence which is neceſſary in a court of law, is by no means requiſite in a court of honour.

TOR. Perhaps it would be more to the honour of your honourable courts if it was. [*Exeunt.*

The Scene changes to an Apartment at Mrs. Crayon's.

BEL. (*behind.*) My dear, you muſt excuſe me.

MAID. Indeed, Sir, you muſt not go up ſtairs.

BEL. Indeed but I will; the man is poſitive to the houſe, and I'll ſearch every room in it, from the cellar to the garret, if I don't find the lady. James, don't ſtir from the ſtreet door.

Enter Belville *followed by a Maid.*

MAID. Sir, you are the ſtrangeſt gentleman I ever met

met with in all my born days:—I wiſh my miſtreſs was at home.

BEL. I am a ſtrange fellow, my dear—But if your miſtreſs was at home, I ſhou'd take the liberty of peeping into the apartments.

MAID. Sir, there's company in that room, you can't go in there.

BEL. Now that's the very reaſon I will go in.

MAID. This muſt be ſome great man, or he wou'dn't behave ſo obſtropolous.

BEL. Good manners by your leave a little. *(forcing the door.)* Whoever my gentleman is, I'll call him to a ſevere reckoning:—I have been juſt call'd to one myſelf, for making free with another man's ſiſter.

Enter Leeſon *followed by* Connolly.

LEES. Who is it that dares commit an outrage upon this apartment?

CON. An Engliſhman's very lodging; ay, and an Iriſhman's too, I hope, is his caſtle;—an Iriſhman is an Engliſhman all the world over.

BEL. Mr. Leeſon!

MAID. O we ſhall have murder. *(running off.*

CON. Run into that room, my dear, and ſtay with the young lady. *(Exit Maid.*

LEES. And Connolly let nobody elſe into that room.

CON. Let me alone for that, honey, if this gentleman has fifty people.

LEES. Whence is it, Mr. Belville, that you perſecute me thus with injuries?

BEL. I am fill'd with aſtoniſhment!

CON. Faith, to ſpeak the truth, you do look a little ſurpriz'd.

LEES. Anſwer me, Sir; what is the foundation of this new violence?

BEL. I am come, Mr. Leeſon, upon an affair, Sir—

CON. The devil burn me if he was half ſo much confounded a while ago, when there was a naked ſword at his breaſt.

BEL.

BEL. I am come, Mr. Leeſon, upon an affair, Sir, that----How the devil ſhall I open it to him, ſince the tables are ſo fairly turn'd upon me.

LEES. Diſpatch, Sir, for I have company in the next room.

BEL. A lady, I ſuppoſe?

LEES. Suppoſe it is, Sir?

BEL. And the lady's name is Moreland, isn't it, Sir?

LEES. I can't ſee what buſineſs you have with her name, Sir, You took away my ſiſter, and I hope you have no deſigns upon the lady in the next room.

BEL. Indeed but I have.

LEES. The devil you have!

CON. Well, this is the moſt unaccountable man I ever heard of, he'll have all the women in the town, I believe.

LEES, And pray, Sir, what pretenſions, have you to the lady in the next room, even ſuppoſing her to be Miſs Moreland?

BEL. No other pretenſions than what a brother ſhould have to the defence of his ſiſter's honour: You thought yourſelf authoriſed to cut my throat a-while ago in a ſimilar buſineſs.

LEES. And is Miſs Moreland your ſiſter?

BEL. Sir, there is inſolence in that queſtion; you know ſhe is.

LEES. By heaven, I did not know it till this moment; but I rejoice at the diſcovery: This is blow for blow!

CON. Devil burn me but they have fairly made a ſwop of it.

BEL. And you really didn't know that Miſs Moreland was my ſiſter?

LEES. I don't conceive myſelf under much neceſſity of apologizing to you, Sir; but I am incapable of a diſhonourable deſign upon any woman; and tho' Miſs Moreland in our ſhort acquaintance, repeatedly

peatedly mentioned her brother, ſhe never once told me that his name was Belville.

Con. And he has had ſuch few opportunities of being in her company, unleſs by letters, honey, that he knew nothing more of her connections, than her being a ſweet pretty creter, and having 30,000 l.

Bel. The fortune, I dare ſay, no way leſſened the force of her attractions.

Lees. I am above diſſimulation---It really did not.

Bel. Well, Mr. Leeſon, our families have ſhewn ſuch a very ſtrong inclination to come together, that it would really be a pity to diſappoint them.

Con. Upon my ſoul and ſo it would; though the dread of being forc'd to have a huſband, the young lady tells us, quicken'd her reſolution to marry this gentleman.

Bel. O ſhe had no violence of that kind to apprehend from her family; therefore, Mr. Leeſon, ſince you ſeem as neceſſary for the girl's happineſs, as ſhe ſeems for your's, you ſhall marry her here in town, with the conſent of all her friends, and ſave yourſelf the trouble of an expedition to Scotland.

Lees. Can I believe you ſerious?

Bel. Zounds, Leeſon, that air of ſurpriſe is a ſad reproach! I didn't ſurpriſe you when I did a bad action, but I raiſe your aſtoniſhment, when I do a good one.

Con. And by my ſoul, Mr. Belville, if you knew how a good action becomes a man, you'd never do a bad one as long as you liv'd.

Lees. You have given me life and happineſs in one day, Mr. Belville! however, it is now time you ſhould ſee your ſiſter; I know you'll be gentle with her, tho' you have ſo much reaſon to condemn her choice, and generouſly remember that her elopement proceeded from the great improbability there was of a beggar's ever meeting with the approbation of her family.

Bel.

BEL. Don't apologize for your circumſtances, Leeſon; a princeſs could do no more than make you happy, and if you make her ſo, you meet her upon terms of the moſt perfect equality.

LEES. This is a new way of thinking, Mr. Belville.

BEL. 'Tis only an honeſt way of thinking, and I conſider my ſiſter a gainer upon the occaſion; for a man of your merit is more difficult to be found, than a woman of her fortune. [*Exeunt Leeſon and Belville.*

CON. What's the reaſon now that I can't ſkip, and laugh, and rejoice, at this affair? Upon my ſoul my heart's as full as if I had met with ſome great misfortune. Well, pleaſure in the extreme is certainly a very painful thing: I am really aſham'd of theſe womans drops, and yet I don't know but that I ought to bluſh for being aſham'd of them, for I am ſure nobody's eye ever looks half ſo well, as when it is diſfigured by a tear of humanity. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE *a Drawing-Room.*

Enter BELVILLE.

BEL. WELL, happineſs is once more mine, and the women are all going in tip-top ſpirits to the maſquerade. Now, Mr. Belville, let me have a few words with you; Miſs Walſingham, the ripe, the luxurious Miſs Walſingham, expects to find you there, burning with impatience:----But, my dear friend, after the occurrences of the day, can you be weak enough to plunge into freſh crimes? Can you be baſe enough

enough to abuſe the goodneſs of that angel your wife; and wicked enough, not only to deſtroy the innocence which is ſhelter'd beneath your own roof, but to expoſe your family perhaps again, to the danger of loſing a ſon, a brother, a father, and a huſband? The poſſeſſion of the three Graces is ſurely too poor a recompence for the folly you muſt commit, for the ſhame you muſt feel, and the conſequences you muſt hazard. Upon my ſoul if I ſtruggle a little longer, I ſhall riſe in my own opinion, and be leſs a raſcal than I think myſelf:---Ay, but the object is bewitching;---the matter will be an eternal ſecret---and if it is known that I ſneak in this pitiful manner from a fine woman, when the whole elyſium of her perſon ſolicits me:---well, and am I afraid the world ſhould know that I have ſhrunk from an infamous action?---A thouſand bleſſings on you dear conſcience for that one argument;---I ſhall be an honeſt man after all---Suppoſe, however, that I give her the meeting; that's dangerous;--that's dangerous:--and I am ſo little accuſtomed to do what is right, that I ſhall certainly do what is wrong, the moment I am in the way of temptation. Come, Belville, your reſolution is not ſo very ſlender a dependance, and you owe Miſs Walſingham reparation for the injury which you have done her principles. I'll give her the meeting---I'll take her to the houſe I intended---I'll----Zounds! what a fool I have been all this time, to look for precarious ſatisfaction in vice, when there is ſuch exquiſite pleaſure to be found at a certainty in virtue! [*Exit*

Enter Lady Rachel *and Mrs* Belville.

Lady Rach. For mirth ſake don't let him ſee us: There has been a warm debate between his paſſion and his conſcience.

Mrs. Bel. And the latter is the conqueror, my life for it.

Lady Rach. Dear Mrs. Belville you are the beſt of women, and ought to have the beſt of huſbands.

Mrs. Bel. I *have* the beſt of huſbands.

Lady Rach. I have not time to diſpute the matter with you now; but I ſhall put you into my comedy to teach wives, that the beſt receipt for matrimonial happineſs, is to be deaf, dumb, and blind.

Mrs. Bel. Poh! poh! you are a ſatireſt, Lady Rachel—But we are loſing time; ſhou'dn't we put on our dreſſes, and prepare for the grand ſcene?

Lady Rach. Don't you tremble at the trial?

Mrs. Bel. Not in the leaſt, I am ſure my heart has no occaſion.

Lady Rach. Have you let Miſs Walſingham into our little plot?

Mrs. Bel. You know ſhe cou'd not be inſenſible of Mr. Belville's deſign upon herſelf, and it is no farther than that deſign, we have any thing to carry into execution.

Lady Rach. Well, ſhe may ſerve to facilitate the matter, and therefore I am not ſorry that you have truſted her.

Mrs. Bel. We ſhall be too late, and then what ſignifies all your fine plotting.

Lady Rach. Is it not a little pang of jealouſy that wou'd fain now quicken our motions?

Mrs. Bel. No, Lady Rachel, it is a certainty of my huſband's love and generoſity, that makes me wiſh to come to the trial. I wou'd not exchange my confidence in his affections for all the mines of Peru; ſo nothing you can ſay will make me miſerable.

Lady Rach. You are a moſt unaccountable woman; ſo away with you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *continued.*

Enter Spruce *and* Ghaſtly.

Spruce. Why, Ghaſtly, the old general your maſter is a greater fool than I ever thought he was: He want to marry Miſs Walſingham?

Ghast. Mrs. Tempeſt ſuſpected that there was ſome

ſomething going forward, by all his hugger-mugger conſulting with Mr. Terrington; and ſo ſet me on to liſten.

SPRUCE. She's a good friend of your's, and that thing ſhe made the General give you the other day in the hoſpital, is I ſuppoſe a ſnug hundred a year.

GHAST. Better than two; I waſh for near four thouſand people: there was a major of horſe who put in for it, and pleaded a large family—

SPRUCE. With long ſervices, I ſuppoſe.

GHAST. Yes, but Mrs. Tempeſt inſiſted upon my long ſervices; ſo the major was ſet aſide—However to keep the thing from the damn'd News-papers, I fancy he will ſucceed the barber, who died laſt night, poor woman, of a lying-in fever, after being brought to bed of three children.---Places in public inſtitutions.—

SPRUCE. Are often ſweetly diſpos'd I think of aſking Belville for ſomething, one of theſe days.

GHAST. He has great intereſt.

SPRUCE. I might be a juſtice of peace, if I pleaſed, and in a ſhabby neighbourhood, where the mere ſwearing would bring in ſomething tolerable; but there are ſo many ſtrange people let into the commiſſion now-a-days, that I ſhou'dn't like to have my name in the liſt.

GHAST. You are right.

SPRUCE. No, no, I leave that to paltry tradeſmen, and ſhall think of ſome little ſinecure, or a ſmall penſion on the Iriſh eſtabliſhment.

GHAST. Well, ſucceſs attend you. I muſt hobble home as faſt as I can, to know if Mrs. Tempeſt has any orders. O, there's a rare ſtorm brewing for our old goat of a General.

SPRUCE. When ſhall we crack a bottle together?

GHAST. O, I ſhan't touch a glaſs of Claret theſe three weeks; for laſt night I gave nature a little ſillip with a drunken bout, according to the doctor's directions; I have entirely left off bread, and I am in great hopes that I ſhall get rid of my gout by theſe means,

ſpecially if I can learn to eat my meat quite raw like a cannibal.

SPRUCE. Ha, ha, ha!

GHAST. Look at me, Spruce, I was once as likely a young fellow as any under ground in the whole pariſh of St. James's:--but waiting on the General ſo many years.

SPRUCE. Ay, and following his example, Ghaſtly.

GHAST. 'Tis too true: has reduc'd me to what you ſee. Theſe miſerable ſpindles wou'd do very well for a lord or a duke, Spruce; but they are a ſad diſgrace to a poor valet de chambre. [*Exit.*

SPRUCE. Well, I don't believe there's a gentleman's gentleman within the weekly bills, who joins a prudent ſolicitude for the main-chance, to a ſtrict care of his conſtitution, better than myſelf. I have a little girl who ſtands me in about three guineas a week; I never bet more than a pound upon a rubber of whiſt; I always ſleep with my head very warm; and ſwallow a new laid egg every morning with my chocolate. [*Exit.*

The Scene changes to the Street, two Chairs croſs the Stage, knock at a Door, and ſet down BELVILLE *and a Lady.*

BEL. This way, my dear creature! [*Exeunt.*

Enter Gen. Savage, *Capt.* Savage, *and* Torrington.

CAPT. There! there they go in:----You ſee the place is quite convenient, not twenty yards from the maſquerade.

GEN. How cloſely the fellow ſticks to her.

TOR. Like the great ſeal to the peerage patent of a chancellor. But, gentlemen, we have ſtill no more than proof preſumptive:---where is the ocular demonſtration which we were to have?

CAPT. I'll ſwear to the blue domino; 'tis a very remarkable one, and ſo is Belville's.

TOR. You wou'd have rare cuſtom among the Newgate

gate ſollicitors, if you'd venture an oath upon the identity of the party under it.

GEN. 'Tis the very ſize and ſhape of Miſs Walſingham.

TOR. And yet I have a ſtrange notion that there is a trifling *alibi* in this caſe.

GEN. It wou'd be a damn'd affair if we ſhou'd be countermin'd.

CAPT. O, follow me, here's the door left luckily open, and I'll ſoon clear up the matter beyond a queſtion. [*Enters the houſe.*

TOR. Why your ſon is mad, General. This muſt produce a deadly breach with Belville. For heav'n's ſake, let's go in and prevent any exceſſes of his raſhneſs.

GEN. By all means, or the poor fellow's generous anxiety on my account may be productive of very fatal conſequences. *Exeunt.*

The Scene changes to an aparment, Belville *unmaſked, and a lady in a blue domino maſk'd.*

BEL. My dear Miſs Walſingham, we are now perfectly ſafe, yet I will by no means intreat you to unmaſk, becauſe I am convinc'd, from the propriety with which you repuls'd my addreſſes this morning, that you intend the preſent interview ſhould make me ſtill more deeply ſenſible of my preſumption.—I never lied ſo aukwardly in all my life; if it was to make her comply, I ſhould be at no loſs for language. (*aſide*) The ſituation in which I muſt appear before you, Madam, is certainly a very humiliating one; but I am perſuaded that your generoſity will be gratified to hear, that I have bid an everlaſting adieu to my profligacy, and am now only alive to the virtues of Mrs. Belville.—She won't ſpeak—I don't wonder at it, for brazen as I am myſelf, if I met ſo mortifying a rejection, I ſhould be curſedly out of countenance. (*aſide.*

CAPT.

CAPT. *(behind)* I will go in.

GRN. *(behind.)* I command you to deſiſt.

TOR. *(behind.)* This will be an affair for the Old-Bailey.

(The noiſe grows more violent, and continues.

BEL. Why, what the devil is all this?—Don't be alarm'd, Miſs Walſingham, be aſſur'd I'll protect you at the hazard of my life;—ſtep into this cloſet,—you ſhan't be diſcover'd depend upon it; *(ſhe goes in)*: And now to find out the cauſe of this confuſion. *(unlocks the door.*

Enter Gen. Savage, *Capt.* Savage, *and* Torrington.

BEL. Savage! what is the meaning of this ſtrange behaviour?

CAPT. Where is Miſs Walſingham?

BEL. So then, Sir, this is a premeditated ſcheme, for which I am oblig'd to your friendſhip.

CAPT. Where's Miſs Walſingham, Sir?

GEN. Dear Belville, he is out of his ſenſes; this ſtorm was entirely againſt my orders.

TOR. If he proceeds much longer in theſe vagaries, we muſt amuſe him with a commiſſion of lunacy.

BEL. This is neither a time nor a place for argument, Mr. Torrington; but as you and the General ſeem to be in the poſſeſſion of your ſenſes, I ſhall be glad if you'll take this very friendly gentleman away; and depend upon it, I ſhan't die in his debt for the preſent obligation.

CAPT. And depend upon it, Sir, pay the obligation when you will, I ſhan't ſtir 'till I ſee Miſs Walſingham.—Look'ee, Belville, there are ſecret reaſons for my behaving in this manner; reaſons, which you yourſelf will approve, when you know them;---my father here---

GEN. Diſavows your conduct in every particular, and would rejoice to ſee you at the halberds.

TOR.

TOR. And, for my part, I told him previouſly 'twas a downright burglary.

BEL. Well, gentlemen, let your different motives for breaking in upon me in this agreeable manner, be what they may, I don't ſee that I am leſs annoy'd by my friends than my enemy. I muſt therefore again, requeſt that you will all walk down ſtairs.

CAPT. I'll firſt walk into this room.

BEL. Really, I think you will not.

GEN. What phrenzy poſſeſſes the fellow to urge this matter farther?

CAPT. While there's a ſingle doubt ſhe triumphs over juſtice; *(drawing.)* I will go into that room.

BEL. Then you muſt make your way thro' me.

Enter Mrs. Belville.

Mrs. BEL. Ah!

CAPT. There, I knew ſhe was in the room:—there's the blue domino.

GEN. Put up your ſword, if you don't deſire to be caſhier'd from my favour for ever.

BEL. Why, wou'd you come out, madam? But, you have nothing to apprehend.

CAPT. Pray, madam, will you have the goodneſs to unmaſk?

BEL. She ſhan't unmaſk.

CAPT. I ſay ſhe ſhall.

BEL. I ſay ſhe ſhall not.

Mrs. BEL. Pray, let me oblige the gentleman?

CAPT. Death and deſtruction, here's a diſcovery!

GEN. *and* TOR. *Mrs.* Belville!

Mrs. BEL. Yes, Mrs. Belville, gentlemen: Is conſugal fidelity ſo very terrible a thing now a-days, that a man is to ſuffer death for being found in company with his own wife?

BEL. My love, this is a ſurprize, indeed—But it is a moſt agreeable one; ſince you find me really aſham'd of my former follies, and cannot now doubt the ſincerity of my reformation. *Mrs.* BEL

Mrs. BEL. I am too happy! this ſingle moment wou'd over pay a whole life of anxiety.

BEL. Where ſhall I attend you? Will you return to the maſquerade?

Mrs. BEL. O no! Lady Rachel and Miſs Walſingham are by this time at our houſe, with Mr. Leeſon and the Iriſh gentleman whom you preſs'd into our party, impatiently expecting the reſult of this adventure.

BEL. Give me leave to conduct you home then from this ſcene of confuſion. To-morrow, Captain Savage, I ſhall beg the favour of your explanation; (*aſide to him as he goes out.*) Kind gentlemen, your moſt humble ſervant.

Mrs. BEL. And when you next diſturb a *tête a tête*, for pity to a poor wife, don't let it be ſo very uncuſtomary a party, as the matrimonial one.

(*Exeunt* Bel. *and Mrs.* Bel.

GEN. (*to the Capt.*) So, Sir, you have led us upon a bleſſed expedition here.

TOR. Now, don't you think that if your courts of honour, like our courts of law, ſearch'd a little minutely into evidence, it wou'd be equally to the credit of their underſtandings?

CAPT. Tho' I am cover'd with confuſion at my miſtake (for you ſee, Belville was miſtaken as well as myſelf,) I am overjoy'd at this diſcovery of Miſs Walſingham's innocence.

GEN. I ſhou'd exult in it too, with a *feu de joy*, if it didn't now ſhew the impoſſibility of her ever being Mrs. Savage.

CAPT. Dear Sir, why ſhould you think that an impoſſibility? Tho' ſome miſtakes have occurr'd conſequence I ſuppoſe, of Mrs. Belville's little plot upon her huſband, I dare ſay Miſs Walſingham may yet be prevail'd upon to come into our family.

TOR. Take care of a new error in your proceedings, young gentleman.

GEN.

GEN. Ay, another defeat would make us compleatly despicable.

CAPT. Sir, I'll forfeit my life, if she does not consent to the marriage this very night.

GEN. Only bring this matter to bear, and I'll forgive you every thing.

TOR. The Captain shou'd be inform'd, I think General, that she declin'd it peremptorily this evening.

GEN. Ay, do you hear that, Horace?

CAPT. I am not at all surpriz'd at it, considering the general misconception we labour'd under. But I'll immediately to Belville's, explain the whole mystery, and conclude every thing to your satisfaction. [*Exit.*

GEN. So, Torrington, we shall be able to take the field again, you see.

TOR. But how in the name of wonder has your son found out your intention of marrying Miss Walsingham? I look'd upon myself as the only person acquainted with the secret.

GEN. That thought has march'd itself two or three times to my own recollection. For tho' I gave him some distant hints of the affair, I took particular care to keep behind the works of a proper circumspection.

TOR. O, if you gave him any hints at all, I am not surpriz'd at his discovering every thing.

GEN. I shall be all impatience 'till I hear of his interview with Miss Walsingham: Suppose my dear friend we went to Belville's, 'tis but in the next street, and we shall be there in the lighting of a match.

TOR. Really this is a pretty business for a man of my age and profession, trot here, trot there. But, as I have been weak enough to make myself a kind of party in the cause, I own that I have curiosity enough to be anxious about the determination.

GEN. Come along my old boy; and remember the song, "*Servile spirits*, &c." [*Exeunt.*

The Scene changes to Belville's.

Enter Captain Savage *and Miſs* Walſingham.

CAPT. Nay, but my deareſt Miſs Walſingham, the extenuation of my own conduct to Belville made it abſolutely neceſſary for me to diſcover my engagements with you; and as happineſs is now ſo fortunately in our reach, I flatter myſelf you will be prevail'd upon to forgive an error, which proceeded only from an extravagance of love.

Miſs WAL. To think me capable of ſuch an action, Captain Savage! I am terrified at the idea of a union with you, and it is better for a woman at any time, to ſacrifice an inſolent lover, than to accept of a ſuſpicious huſband.

CAPT. In the happieſt unions, my deareſt creature, there muſt be always ſomething to overlook on both ſides.

Miſs WAL. Very civil, truly.

CAPT. Pardon me, my life, for this frankneſs; and recollect, that if the lover has thro' miſconception been unhappily guilty, he brings a huſband altogether reform'd to your hands.

Miſs WAL. Well, I ſee I muſt forgive you at laſt, ſo I may as well make a merit of neceſſity, you provoking creature.

CAPT. And may I hope, indeed, for the bleſſing of this hand?

Miſs WAL. Why, you wretch, would you have me force it upon you? I think, after what I have ſaid, a ſoldier might have ventur'd to take it without farther ceremony.

CAPT. Angelic creature! thus I ſeize it as my lawful prize.

Miſs WAL. Well, but now you have obtained this ineſtimable prize, Captain, give me again leave to aſk if you have had a certain explanation with the General?

CAPT.

CAPT. How can you doubt it?

Miſs WAL. And he is really impatient for our marriage?

CAPT. 'Tis incredible how earneſt he is.

Miſs WAL. What, did he tell you of his Interview with me this evening, when he brought Mr. Torrington?

CAPT. He did.

Miſs WAL. O, then, I can have do doubt.

CAPT. If a ſhadow of doubt remains, here he comes to remove it. Joy, my dear Sir! joy a thouſand times!

Enter General Savage, *and* Torrington.

GEN. What, my dear boy, have you carried the day?

Miſs WAL. I have been weak enough to indulge him with a victory, indeed, General.

GEN. *None but the brave, none but the brave, &c.* [*ſinging.*

TOR. I congratulate you heartily on this decree, General.

GEN. This had nearly proved a day of diſappointment, but the ſtars have fortunately turn'd it in my favour, and now I reap the rich reward of my victory. (*Salutes her*)

CAPT. And here I take her from you, as the greateſt good which heav'n can ſend me.

Miſs WAL. O, Captain!

GEN. You take her as the greateſt good which heav'n can ſend you, ſirrah; I take her as the greateſt good which heav'n can ſend me: And now what have you to ſay to her?

Miſs WAL. General Savage!

TOR. Here will be a freſh injunction to ſtop proceedings.

Miſs WAL. Are we never to have done with miſtakes?

GEN. What miſtakes can have happen'd now my ſweeteſt? you deliver'd up your dear hand to me this moment?

Miſs WAL. True, Sir; but I thought you were going to beſtow my dear hand upon this dear gentleman.

GEN. How! that dear gentleman!

CAPT. I am thunder-ſtruck!

TOR. General----*None but the brave, &c.* [*ſings.*

GEN. So the covert way is clear'd at laſt; and you have imagin'd that I was all along negociating for this fellow, when I was gravely ſoliciting for myſelf?

Miſs WAL. No other idea, Sir, ever once enter'd my imagination.

TOR. General,----*Noble minds ſhould ne'er deſpair, &c.* [*ſings.*

GEN. Zounds! here's all the company pouring upon us in full gallop, and I ſhall be the laughing ſtock of the whole town.

Enter Belville, *Mrs.* Belville, *Lady* Rachel, Leeſon *and* Connolly.

BEL. Well, General, we have left you a long time together. Shall I give you joy?

GEN. No; wiſh me demoliſh'd in the fortifications of Dunkirk.

Mrs. BEL. What's the matter?

Lady RACH. The General appears diſconcerted.

LEES. The gentleman looks as if he had fought a hard battle.

CON. Ay, and gain'd nothing but a defeat, my dear.

TOR. I'll ſhew cauſe for his behaviour.

GEN. Death and damnation! not for the world. I am taken by ſurpriſe here; let me conſider a moment how to cut my way thro' the enemy.

Miſs

Miſs WAL. How cou'd you be deceiv'd in this manner. (*To Capt.*

Lady RACH. O, Mr. Torrington, we are much oblig'd to you; you have been in town ever ſince laſt night, and only ſee us now by accident.

TOR. I have been very buſy, Madam; but you look ſadly, very ſadly indeed! your old diſorder the jaundice, I ſuppoſe, has been very troubleſome to you?

Lady RACH. Sir, you have a very extraordinary mode of complimenting your acquaintance.

CON. I don't believe for all that, that there's a word of a lie in the truth he ſpeaks. (*aſide*

Mrs. BEL. Miſs Walſingham, Capt. Savage has been telling Mr. Belville and me of a very extraordinary miſtake.

Miſs WAL. 'Tis very ſtrange indeed, miſtake on miſtake.

BEL. 'Tis no way ſtrange to find every body properly ſtruck with the merit of Miſs Walſingham.

Miſs WAL. A compliment from you now, Mr. Belville, is really worth accepting.

GEN. If I thought the affair cou'd be kept a ſecret, by making the town over to my ſon, ſince I am utterly ſhut out myſelf----

CAPT. He ſeems exceedingly embarraſſed.

GEN. If I thought that;---why mortified as I muſt be in giving it up, I think I cou'd reſolve upon the manœuvre, to ſave myſelf from univerſal ridicule: but it can't be;---it can't be; and I only double my own diſappointment in rewarding the diſobedience of the raſcal who has ſupplanted me. There!---there! they are all talking of it, all laughing at me, and I ſhall run mad!

Mrs. TEMP. (*behind*) I ſay, you feather-headed puppy, he is in this houſe; my own ſervant ſaw him come in, and I will not ſtir 'till I find him.

GEN.

GEN. She here!---then deliberation is over, and I am entirely blown up.

Lady RACH. I'll take notes of this affair.

Enter Mrs. Tempeſt.

Mrs. TEMP. Mighty well, Sir. So you are in love it ſeems;---and you want to be married it ſeems?

LEES. My bleſſed aunt!---O how proud I am of the relation.

GEN. Dear Bab, give me quarter before all this company.

Mrs. TEMP. You are in love, you old fool, are you? and you want to marry Miſs Walſingham, indeed!

CON. I never heard a pleaſanter ſpoken gentlewoman ---O hone, if I had the taming of her, ſhe ſhou'd never be abuſive, without keeping a civil tongue in her head.

Mrs. TEM. Well, Sir, and when is the happy day to be fix'd?

BEL. What the devil, is this true, General?

GEN. True.---Can you believe ſuch an abſurdity?

Mrs. TEMP. Why, will you deny, you miſerable old mummy, that you made propoſal of marriage to her?——

GEN. Yes I do---no I don't---propoſals of marriage!

Miſs WAL. In favour of your ſon.---I'll help him out a little. [*aſide*

GEN. Yes, in favour of my ſon---what the devil ſhall I do?

Mrs. BEL. Shall I take a leſſon from this lady, Mr. Belville? Perhaps if the women of virtue were to pluck up a little ſpirit, they might be ſoon as well treated as kept miſtreſſes.

Mrs. TEMP. Harkee, General Savage, I believe you aſſert a falſehood; but if you ſpeak the truth, give your ſon this moment to Miſs Walſingham, and let me be fairly rid of my rival.

GEN. My ſon! Miſs Walſingham!---Miſs Walſingham, my ſon!

BEL.

BEL. It will do, Horace; it will do.

Mrs. TEMP. No prevarications, General Savage; do what I bid you inſtantly, or by all the wrongs of an enraged woman, I'll ſo expoſe you.——

CON. What a fine fellow this is, to have the command of an army!

GEN. If Miſs Walſingham can be prevailed upon.

TOR. O, ſhe'll oblige you readily---But you muſt ſettle a good fortune upon your ſon.

Mrs. TEMP. That he ſhall do.

Mrs. BEL. Miſs Walſingham, my Dear---

Miſs WAL. I can refuſe nothing either to your requeſt, or to the requeſt of the General.

GEN. Oblige me with your hand then, Madam: come here you—come here Captain. There, there is Miſs Walſingham's hand for you.

CON. And as pretty a little fiſt it is, as any in the three kingdoms.

GEN. Torrington ſhall ſettle the fortune.

LEES. I give you joy moſt heartily, Madam.

BEL. We all give her joy.

CAPT. Mine is beyond the power of expreſſion.

Miſs WAL. *(aſide to the company)* And ſo is the General's, I believe.

CON. O faith, that may be eaſily ſeen by the ſweetneſs of his countenance.

TOR. Well, the cauſe being now at laſt determin'd, I think we may all retire from the court.

GEN. And without any great credit, I fear, to the General.

CON. By my ſoul, you may ſay that.——

Mrs. TEMP. Do you murmur, Sir?---Come this moment home with me.

GEN. I'll go any where to hide this miſerable head of mine: what a damn'd campaign have I made of it!

[Exeunt Gen. and Mrs. Temp.

CON.

Miſs

CON. Upon my ſoul, if I was in the General's place, I'd divide the houſe with this devil; I'd keep within doors myſelf, and make her take the outſide.

BEL. The day has been a buſy one, thanks to the communicative diſpoſition of the Captain.

Mrs. BEL. And the evening ſhould be chearful.

BEL. I ſhan't therefore part with one of you, 'till we have had a hearty laugh at our general adventures.

Miſs WAL. They have been very whimſical indeed; yet if repreſented on the ſtage, I hope they wou'd be found not only entertaining, but inſtructive.

Lady RACH. Inſtructive! why the modern Critics ſay that the only buſineſs of Comedy is to make people laugh.

BEL. That is degrading the dignity of letters exceedingly, as well as leſſening the utility of the ſtage —A good comedy is a capital effort of genius, and ſhould therefore be directed to the nobleſt purpoſes.

Miſs WAL. Very true; and unleſs we learn ſomething while we chuckle, the carpenter who nails a Pantomime together, will be entitled to more applauſe, than the beſt comic poet in the kingdom.

2 JY 50 [*Exeunt omnes.*